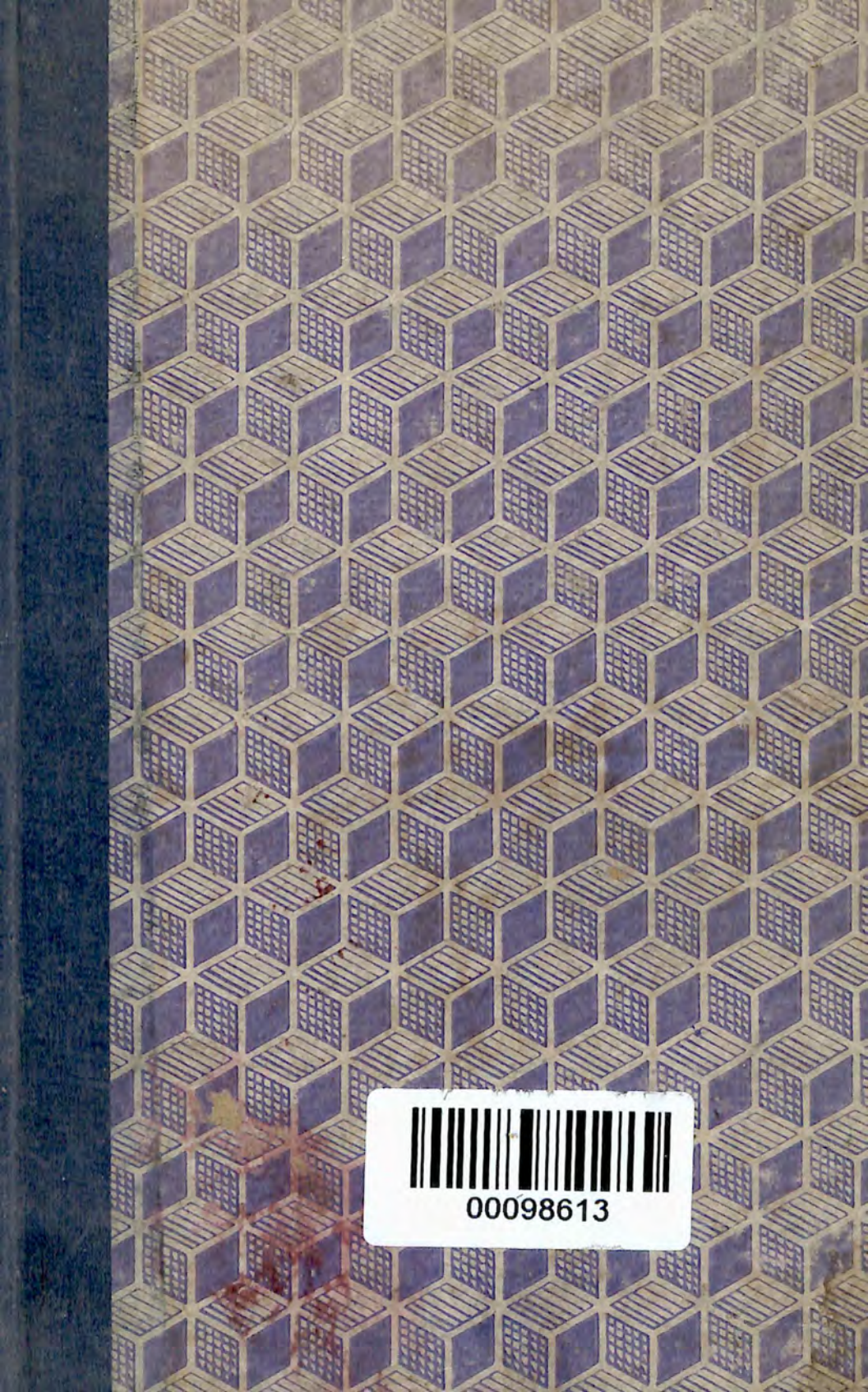
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WANDERING WORDS

Frontispiece. FROM THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN.

WANDERING WORDS

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BY

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD, M.A., K.C.I.E., C.S.I.
AUTHOR OF
"THE LIGHT OF ASIA," "THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD"
"SEAS AND LANDS," ETC. ETC.

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WITH

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM DRAWINGS BY BEN BOOTHBY
AND FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

VV.O.74

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1894

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God
914
Arn Wan
98613

TO

MY COLLEAGUE FOR SO MANY YEARS

AND

EVER KIND FRIEND

J. M. LE SAGE, Esq.

I DEDICATE

THESE

"Wandering Words"

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WANDERING WORDS

I

AN EARTHLY PARADISE

KANAKA GIRL.

It is good to be able to date a letter from Paradise! Would you like to know the exact locality? You must sail south of west for 2100 miles from San Francisco, or south of east 3440 miles from Yokohama, and then you will arrive at the beautiful Hawaiian Islands, where we are anchored at present in the steamship *Belgic*, of the Occidental and Oriental Line, Captain W. H. Walker commanding, bound by way of Honolulu to Yokohama. We are come down to this archipelago out of the usual direct course to Japan, having 600 Chinese coolies to deliver, as labourers, upon the sugar plan-

tations of Oahu and Hawaii. They were taken on to San Francisco last month by the steamship *Rio de Janeiro*, because small-pox had broken out among them before arriving here, and now, having been duly purged in an American quarantine, the unlucky Celestials must be brought all the way back again, and we shall disembark them to-night and to-morrow. It was an unpleasant cargo to carry—these much-wandering Mongolians—since at any moment the disease might again declare itself amidst them, in which case we should have been obliged to take the 600 on to Yokohama, perhaps to Hong-Kong. But the *Belgic* has kept a clean bill of health from the moment of starting, and we and they are to-day safely arrived under the green and golden hills of Oahu, the northernmost of the Sandwich group. Even from the sea the view is charming and full of promise of these delightful islands; none the less so if, as in my own case, the voyager has recently traversed by rail 3800 miles of mainly unlovely scenery between New York and San Francisco, coming by those dreary, drab wildernesses of Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico, and has then steamed for a week without anything to look at except rolling seas and driving clouds. Of course, therefore, we have passed every available hour of our detention here ashore, and seen enough to wonder why people dwell in the changeful latitudes of London and New York, when they might breathe the heavenly air of these ocean paradises, and live in the perpetual Garden of Eden which Nature has laid out

for her happiest children in these hollows and uplands.

There is always a curious difference between one's previous idea of any place and the visual realisation of it. I myself had imagined the Hawaiian cluster to be composed of densely-wooded islets and isles, with dark foliage spread all over the plains and climbing to rounded hills. But I see a broken land much more open and varied than in my anticipation; the lowlands rather bare of trees and vegetation, the uplands ascending by slopes tinted with the tender green of coming crops, to a volcanic Sierra, very rugged, naked, and majestic in outline, seamed and fissured with innumerable glens, each nursing a gradually diminishing riband of verdant embroidery. At one extremity of the long crescent in which Honolulu nestles amid her groves of cocoa-nut palms and bananas, rises precipitously the yellow and red steep of Diamond Head, and on the other soars away into far distance a lofty line of peaks, lifted from the bottom of the sea by some ancient and stupendous telluric spasm. The golden Sierra fades afar into a ridge of rose and violet against the horizon, where the sapphire of the Pacific blends with the turquoise of the sky. The north-east trade-wind, which was blowing in a lively way outside, is quite shut off from our anchorage by those lofty mountains, rising to 4000 feet of elevation and upwards, so that the good ship *Belgic* rides quietly outside the reef to a single cable. The channel is narrow by which the

quiet inner harbour is reached, and we did not enter; but there is plenty of water there, as is evidenced by the U.S.S. *Charleston*, an ironclad of the second class, which is moored within, under the very plumes of the cocoanut groves. Where the coral reef girdles the island beach there occurs a sudden and sharply-marked change from the indigo-coloured waves of the outer deep sea, ruffled with sparkling wavelets, to the sleeping water of the lagoon, motionless, and reflecting the trees and houses in its narrow, unbroken belt of vivid grass-green. The rampart of coral which thus surrounds this side of Oahu lies about six feet under the surface, yet at that depth it amply suffices to break the roll of the ocean; and even the sharks—of which many are cruising about—seldom or never cross the barrier. Exposed to air, the coral hardens into a good building rock, of which many of the Honolulu edifices are constructed; but under water it is soft, and can be broken up easily, so that we observe a steam-dredger busy upon the entrance-channel, deepening it by simply scraping, in order to admit vessels of every burden.

Honolulu from the sea looks a smaller town than she really is, being so much buried in groves and gardens; nor indeed at biggest does she number more than 22,000 citizens, the entire island containing no more than 31,194 inhabitants, and the whole group about 89,000. Of these about 35,000 are natives, 15,000 Chinese, 13,000 Japanese, and 8600

Portuguese; the American residents totalling 1928, and the English 1344. There are, besides, over 1000 Germans scattered about the group, and 600 other foreigners, more or less, including seventy Frenchmen—a mixed population, amid which the indigenous Kanaka race, that well deserved to be perpetuated, is, alas! sadly and steadily decreasing.

That this Paradise of the Pacific is not without its drawback, the voyager will be grievously reminded as he approaches Diamond Head, and comes round into the anchorage of Honolulu. Broad on the port side of the ship, about thirty miles from the little city, Molokai rises fair and fertile from the ocean—the Island of Lepers. Here, as all know too well, banished from the beautiful isles to the west and south, are imprisoned for the term of their natural lives more than a thousand victims of leprosy, that curse of the Hawaiian archipelago; and here Father Damien's example of fearless humanity and divine compassion is being followed by more than one devoted priest and woman. Molokai itself is beautiful enough to be a fitting "Purgatorio" to the "Paradiso" beyond.

You round Diamond Head, as I have said, and, in the bright Pacific morning, with the fresh strong breath of the trade-wind bringing you health and appetite, drop anchor before the town. Then a wild passion will seize you to land; and if this has become so strong after only a week's run across from 'Frisco, how imperious it must have been with those ships' companies of Captain James Cook, of

immortal memory, when the *Endeavour* and *Resolution* first touched at the Sandwich Islands, and gave this enchanting scenery to their own eyes and to the knowledge of the world? For us there are questions of quarantine and of bills of health, which—being at last happily settled—leave passengers free to land. We jump into a native boat, rowed by two lusty Hawaiians, and pull quickly to the shore, passing through the channel of the coral reef, and noting how the water instantly shifts within it from dark blue to light green. The U.S. ships of war *San Francisco* and *Pensacola* are lying inside, together with several large Californian merchantmen, and one or two of the schooners which ply regularly between the islands.

The waterside wharves are without pretension; and the little town in its business portion looks commonplace and untropical. It disappoints, indeed, at first, for the shops and offices are just like those of a third-rate American city, with the usual tram-cars running along the streets, and the inevitable telegraph poles bordering the side-walks. But the islanders at once attract your attention; the men, well-built, brown as coffee-berries, many walking or riding with "leïs" (flower garlands) wreathed round their straw hats, the women with nice oval faces, very often pretty, always intelligent, animated, and gentle, dressed in that long, loose, coloured night-gown, without a waist, which the early missionaries invented for their too lightly-clad converts. Those excellent men were but poor *modistes*, and it

is to be regretted they did not hit upon something more becoming. Yet the Kanaka damsels and matrons manage to wear such absurd garments with all the grace of which the attire is capable; and it is a pretty sight to see one of them, in this clothes-bag of a disguise, leap lightly into the saddle, astride, neatly jerking the lower part of her garb between her knees, as she settles into her seat, thus making the loose sac cover her lower limbs to the ankle with perfect fitness and decorum. The king has lately died, and many of these robes are, therefore, still black; but the Kanakas love bright colours, and you will encounter girls dressed like humming-birds or tiger-moths as regards gay tints. We call at the office of a gentleman well known and respected in the islands—a great sugar-planter, employing more than 5000 hands—and in an instant, upon his cordial greeting, the gates of the place seem all to fly open. Mr. W. G. Irwin, our very kind and genial host, puts lips to the telephone—which is an universal institution here, used in every abode,—and begins by calling forth, from his high duties of state, the Prime Minister, the Hon. Samuel Parker, as if it were the most natural thing in the world, in these graceful and lazy latitudes, that a Cabinet should suspend its sittings to make good cheer for passing unknown friends and visitors. His Excellency soon turns up, a handsome native gentleman of good stature, a dark, highly intelligent countenance, and soft brown eyes, directly descended—as his manly carriage might betoken—from the chieftains

of the island whom Captain Cook met 114 years ago. He plunges genially into the task of making a festive and instructive programme for us, which is even to include the honour of presentation to her Majesty Queen Liliuokalani. Afterwards, drives, excursions into the country, a dinner with "poï" and other native dishes, and in the evening the "Hula" dance, and indigenous songs and music. It seems a positive delight to the Hawaiians, high and low, to welcome their guests and to do the honours of their lovely archipelago.

Our first visit is to the abode of "The Hon. Sam," as everybody seems to style the Premier. You soon get clear of the commonplace little business streets and horrible tram-cars, and emerge into the Honolulu of your dreams; Honolulu proper, with charming, low-fronted houses, fringing long embowered lanes, dark and cool with overhanging foliage and gay with countless blossoms. There is no winter, of course, in these happy isles, and thus, albeit we are arrived here in the early part of March, the groves are all green and the garden-fences everywhere brilliant with red hibiscus, the splendid lilac loveliness of the Bougainvilliers, pomegranate, orange, and ohia blossoms.

Fragrances, combined of heliotrope, the Indian champak, and many another sweet-scented flower, fill the soft air. The ample shaded gardens are stately with all sorts of tropical and sub-tropical trees, including palms of many varieties, the cocoa-

nut being most predominant. I observe the koa, a kind of acacia, the iron-tree, the hala—known in India as the keora, having the sweetest of all perfumes—umbrella-trees, bread-fruit trees, guavas, bananas, papaws, and a hundred others familiar to memory, together with many which are new. I noticed everywhere an old bird friend, the Indian myna, hopping about the roads—the lively creature, it seems, has been imported; and I meet at once the sagacious sparrow, that true cosmopolitan, who has taken up his abode in these fair islands. The apartment where Mrs. Parker receives us is, like those of all good houses here, spacious, and open by venetian blinds and verandahs to any soft airs wandering around. This Hawaiian lady—the first whose acquaintance we are privileged to make—wears mourning for the late king, and is easy and charming in her manners, with an unaffected cordiality and goodwill which seem, we find afterwards, to be universal. She honours me by preparing and presenting a lovely bouquet of flowers from the garden, in which the yellow roses are of special splendour and perfection.

Next we drive, with excellent American horses, along the line of the sea-beach, and through a public park, prettily laid out, to Mr. Irwin's rural residence at Waikiki, where again you behold the Honolulu of your dreams. On the way rice-fields—with the young plants in their tenderest green tint—alternate with copses of ironwood trees, acacias, and palms, and great breadths of banana-plantation, while

always, on your right hand, thunders softly the far-off surf, shut from the beach by that girdle of gleaming emerald, the still water inside the coral reef. Every house along the beautiful highway running round to Diamond Head has this glorious sea-frontage of the golden sand, the green lagoon, the coral barrier, and the gleaming open ocean; and for bathing, fishing, and boating delights, nothing anywhere could surpass it. We see the canoes of the natives come shooting in, like sea-arrows, from the main, on the white neck of a breaker; the paddles flashing, the men—wild with the pleasure of their strength and skill—singing at the top of their well-modulated voices, and no more fearful of the milky roll of a vast Pacific breaker than if it were one of their own little white ponies. They are all accomplished swimmers, and do not seem at all afraid of the sharks, even if capsized outside the coral barrier. It is as good and manly a sight as I have ever seen upon the water, to watch these brown Kanakas drive their frail craft into the mid-fury of the big wave, and then come shorewards leaping with it, high in the air, amidst a storm of spray and broken blue water, safe and peaceful into the sleeping green sanctuary of the lagoon.

At 4.30 P.M. we were to have audience of Queen Liliuokalani. Her Majesty succeeded to the Hawaiian throne rather more than a year ago, on the death of her royal brother, King Kalakaua; but in the first happiness of her reign had the misfortune to lose her consort, His Royal Highness

John Owen Dominis. This deceased Prince was of foreign extraction, and, leaving no issue, the present Heir-Apparent to the throne is the Princess Victoria-Kawekia-Kailani-Lunalilo-Kalaninui-Ahilapalapa, daughter of Princess Liki-liki and of his Excellency A. S. Cleghorn. I know it all reads like the libretto of a fairy-play, where lovely Queens and Princesses marry Jack and Tom, who land from the other side of the globe in full possession of the magic ring; and I should not have felt greatly surprised if we had been met in the Queen's garden by the customary *corps de ballet*, dressed in feathers and flowers, with somebody as Captain Cook to dance a hornpipe. But it is all real, serious, and solid enough, with a very natural, gracious, and noble Queen in Liliuokalani, and a Court, modest but respected, which combines much dignity with unaffected simplicity. I was a little laughed at by my American companions for feeling somewhat shy of entering the presence of her Majesty in my pea-jacket and shipboard attire. But deshabille is the custom of the islands, and the "Hon. Sam," First Minister of the Crown, was himself wearing a shooting-jacket and straw hat; while the father of the Heir-Apparent, also accompanying us, shone resplendent in a red tie and white waistcoat. In fact, the audience was rather by way of a friendly and informal afternoon call, such as the kindly, simple fashions of the island permit, than of any ceremony; although it must not be understood that the Hawaiian Court does not at times observe the most elaborate

ceremonials, and maintain a very strict etiquette indeed.

As for her Majesty, she is "every inch a queen," and bears with noble grace and lofty gentleness the lonely honours of her rank. When we passed from the anteroom of her palace, guarded by a Hawaiian soldier in white uniform, and filled with objects of ancient island royalty and portraits of island potentates departed, we found in a pretty inner apartment, seated, and attended upon by two ladies-in-waiting, the good, intelligent, sweet-faced, and kind-hearted Liliuokalani. The Queen rose, with all the simplicity of a lady welcoming friends, to receive us, and shook hands cordially with each of our party, as each was presented, addressing also a word or two of greeting to him. Dressed in complete mourning, she wore a black robe of silk crape, banded loosely below the bosom after the native fashion, and she carried a black lace-edged handkerchief, but displayed no ornaments, except a magnificent diamond ring. Her countenance—distinctly handsome, and of the most decided Kanaka type—has the colour of coffee, and is surmounted by thick black hair, growing luxuriantly, touched here and there with silvery flecks. At first sight the Queen wins anybody's heart, and commands his true respect and loyalty. Her voice has the soft musical intonation heard in the speech of all her countrywomen, and I have seldom listened to English more perfect or more graceful than that spoken by her Majesty. She did me the honour to

place me in a chair at her side and to enter upon an animated conversation. A blue lotus-blossom expanded in a silver cup upon the table gave occasion for us to talk of the flowers, trees, and fruits of the archipelago, and of ancient flower-fashions there. This led to mention of the first discovery of the group, only 114 years ago, and the Queen became singularly interested when I ventured to tell her how, when a boy, I had ofttimes seen, lying moored as a coal-hulk, amongst the other coal-hulks in the River Thames, the good and famous ship *Endeavour*, which, with her sister vessel the *Resolution*, made such wonderful discoveries under the command of that noble navigator, Captain James Cook, and was the first to cast anchor at the Hawaiian group. Afterwards her Majesty was pleased to describe to us her visit to England at the time of Queen Victoria's Jubilee, renewing the splendid memories of which her heart and mind were full. She recounted to me, with charming enthusiasm, how she sat near our Queen in Westminster Abbey, and what the Queen said to her, and how kind and great-hearted the English Sovereign was, and about the German Crown Prince, how soldierly and grand he looked, and our late departed Prince, the Duke of Clarence, how courteous and amiable he showed himself to her. It was delightful to recline in the milk-warm air, with the broad fans of the bananas waving at the window, and thus listen to the low, pleasant tones of this dark Island Queen, so gentle in her

bereavement, so stately and truly royal in her womanly simplicity. I should judge her to be about fifty years of age, but her rich black hair is only just streaked with grey, and her deep soft brown eyes are as bright and limpid as those of any Kanaka maiden. I shall always preserve the flowers which she gave me, and the memory of her gracious and kindly "Aloha" at parting.

From the Queen's house we went to the Iolani Palace, a large and well-looking, if not exactly an imposing structure, where we saw the royal apartment of state, especially the throne-room. This last is a spacious and handsome chamber, having around it portraits of all the Kings and Queens of Hawaii, from old Kamehameha the First, in his cloak of red and yellow "oo" feathers, who reigned from 1782 to 1819, down to that of the gracious lady whose presence we had just quitted. Between the royal portraits were suspended under glass the various decorations received by the late King Kalakaua, among which I noticed the "Chrysanthemum" of Japan. On either side of the throne—a large arm-chair, upholstered in crimson and gold—stood the Hawaiian emblems of sovereignty, tall staves surmounted with tufts of "oo" feathers, and gilt; from which the "Honourable Sam" politely detached and presented to us "leïs" or scented garlands, made of some dried flower-seed. By this time the dinner-hour had arrived, and we sat down with quite a large party, comprising more than one Minister of State and several of the most prominent gentlemen

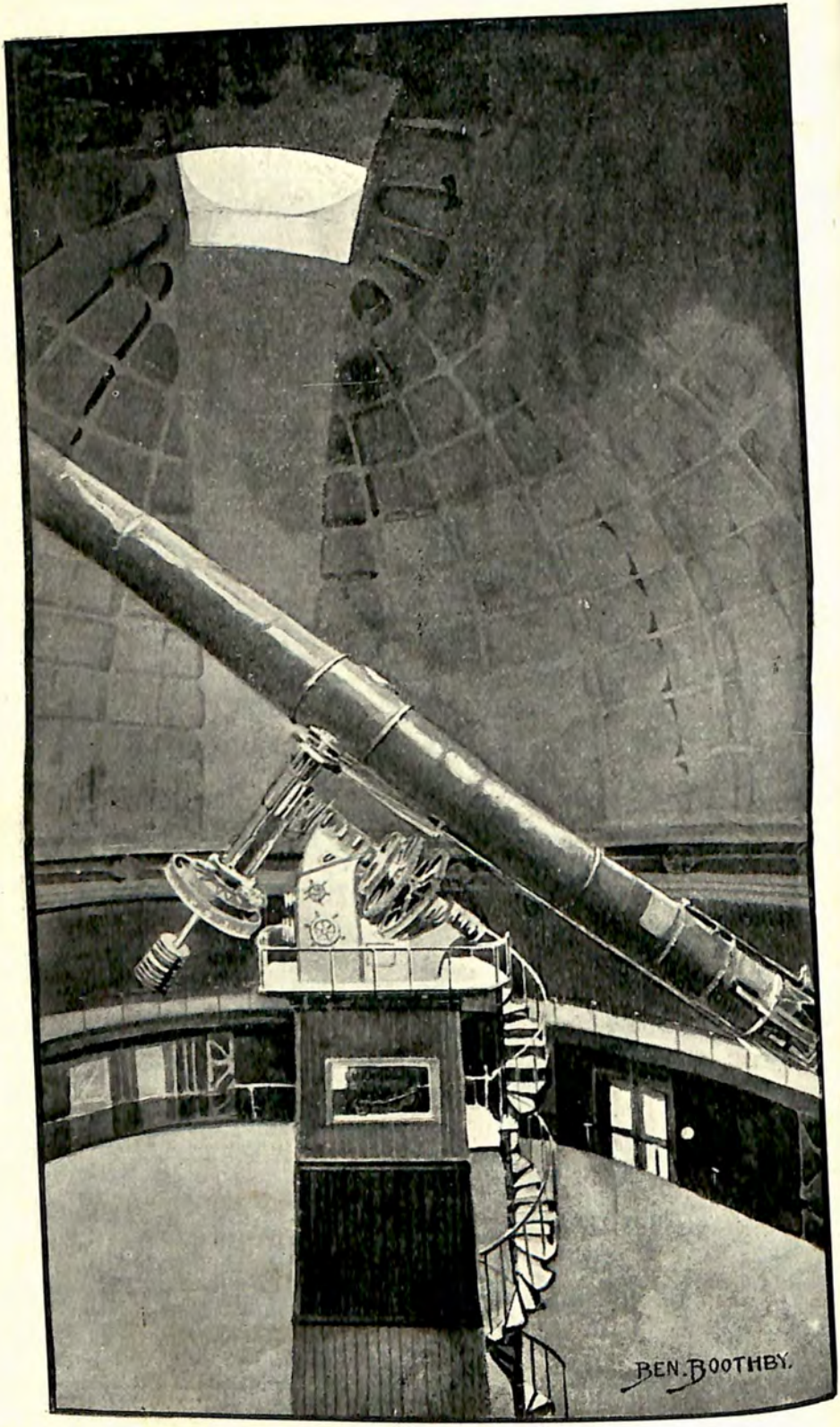
of Honolulu. There were two things on the *menu* which merit attention—the golden plovers, a most delicate and toothsome island-bird, and the chief native staple of the islands, "poï"—which I tasted for the first time. Made of the starchy extract of the "taro," it is a sort of sour gruel, served in large wooden bowls, without salt or seasoning. It is etiquette to eat it with the forefinger, which is dipped into the sticky mass, and emerges charged with a long festoon of "poï." By a quick motion, easily learned, you twist this round the finger-point and suck it off, dipping the wet digit again and again in the bowl. There is no real indelicacy in this habit, because the viscid stuff sticks to what touches it, and thus you cannot come in contact with any of your neighbour's portion, beyond the "dollop" on your own finger-end. All through dinner-time and afterwards we had a choir of native "boys" singing to us native songs, with accompaniments on the "tarapatch," a kind of small guitar. Some of the songs were very sweet and tender, particularly one which we made them repeat again and again, beginning, "Ninni-mai, apeelee"—which, being interpreted, is "Come to me close, close until you touch me." The Kanakas also sang us the music of the "Hoola" dance, and performed some of its figures, which were of a decidedly Polynesian character, and not quite such as could be taught in a polite dancing-academy of New York or London. The musicians finally came off to the ship with us in our steam-launch, and continued their native chants of love and farewell until the anchor

was weighed, when they departed with the "Honourable Sam" and all our other kind and warm-hearted friends for the shore, singing "Aloha loë" as long as we could hear, and taking with them our grateful thoughts.

March 8th, 1892.

II

WATCHING THE STARS



INTERIOR OF THE LICK OBSERVATORY. *P.* 19.

THE LICK OBSERVATORY.

II

WATCHING THE STARS

THERE was no national institution in all the United States which I more desired to visit than the famous Observatory on the top of Mount Hamilton, in California. The great Republic abounds with noble monuments of the public spirit and generosity of her citizens. In almost every town and city of the sixty or seventy where I have lately delivered my poetical readings, I saw with admiration schools, colleges, libraries, hospitals, lecture-halls, music-halls, lyceums, gardens, parks and picture galleries,

given to the people by rich men who had made their money among them. No country in the world shows such examples of civic generosity, and the foreigner —if an Englishman in America, ought ever to bear that name—grows positively dazzled with the splendid succession of those bountiful endowments.

But the Lick Observatory appeals in a special manner to his imagination. He thinks of it as a gift to the world at large—a magnificent dowry bestowed on the science of astronomy under circumstances of advantage hardly to be equalled elsewhere. The more he knows, no doubt, of that science, the less exaggerated expectations he will have of what "the biggest glass in the world" can accomplish compared with smaller instruments. But all the same he will want ardently to see it, to look through it at certain special objects in the heavens, to hear the official astronomers talk who have the great "optick" in their charge, as well as by a personal pilgrimage to do homage to the memory of the California miner, James Lick, who has his tomb on that sky-piercing height under the huge telescope which his well-spent wealth planted on the Pacific Hill. Accordingly, on arriving in San Francisco, at the close of my engagements I put aside more than one delightful social attraction, in order to secure ample time for the visit which I had promised myself to this most remarkable and interesting spot.

Modern astronomy owes, it must be confessed, a heavy debt to the vanity—or may we say the self-respect?—of man. The general mind, perhaps,

hardly realises, even at this day, what a tremendous blow was dealt at human self-conceit and against all the Ptolemaic religions founded to suit it, by the discoveries of Copernicus and Galileo. Well might the priests of the old orthodoxies stand aghast at the latter, and even go so dreadfully far as to burn the gentle and wise Giordano Bruno! At a stroke the Florentine astronomer's ejaculation "E pur se muove!" swept away all the theology of Dante and his sacerdotal doctors, made the cosmology of the "Divine Comedy" impossible and grotesque, and dethroned the race and this planet which it inhabits from its imagined pre-eminence to an obscure and insignificant position.

Old-fashioned Christianity had taught that our world was the centre of things round which the sun revolved; for the sake of which the stars were hung up like Japanese lanterns in the firmament; and in direct relations to which all the forces of infinite space were established. The "scheme of salvation," as then understood, fitted in well enough with such an egotistic view, as also the austere Dante's basin-shaped Hell and conical Purgatory with the concentric circles of Paradise upon its top. But as soon as Copernicus and Galileo exploded the theory, and proved that we are almost the "last of the least," dwelling on one of the smallest bodies in space, invisible to all but a small number of our closer neighbours, religions had to suppress such men, or else, as will hereafter need to be done, to expand their own doctrines and contract their own previous preten-

sions. At present they have only partially performed all this. The boldest and truest, even, have not yet come into step with "star-eyed Science." Those ancient, mediæval, and so-called orthodox absurdities of a local "hell" and "heaven," with the fables of Joshua's miracle and of Hezekiah's reprieve, linger still, like our popular expressions of "sunrise" and "sunset" and the belief in the Mosaic cosmogony. Christianity itself has not yet sufficiently assimilated Copernican and Darwinian doctrines. When it does, it will earnestly thank Science for showing how much more glorious it is to be "least in the kingdom of heaven" than greatest in that petty sub-kingdom of nature which the priests constructed; and of how much nobler promise we should consider it to be descendants of a mollusc and afterward of an ape, with all the heights of creation to ascend to, than creatures suddenly made out of clay to occupy a garden. But astronomy, which has so rudely thrust man down from the pinnacle of his bygone ignorant arrogance, certainly owes him the reparation of such a scientific solace, and will, year by year, bring him more and more of this by perpetually extending his knowledge of the vastness and splendour and wonder of the visible universe, of which to be a portion, even the most humble, is to be incomparably higher and grander than to be feebly and fixedly alone in that old absurd cosmogony, and to have the stars for candles.

Astronomy, I indeed think, is the chief present

hope of humanity, the best teacher of real and practical religion, which will redeem men from the folly of materialism by showing matter as infinite and as spiritual as spirit itself. To effect her high and destined work she needs, first, good equipments, like those on Mount Hamilton, for the prosecution of research; and, next, interpreters of insight and genius to convey with simplicity, but without scientific degradation, to the popular understanding, the immense and elevating generalisations, the stupendous conclusions of the professional star-gazers, who can seldom themselves do full literary justice to the terrestrial and human purport of the mighty facts which their skill elicits and establishes.

With these ideas in mind I was very glad to find at last an opportunity of visiting the Lick Observatory. To reach it, you take train from San Francisco, and travel fifty miles almost due south of the City of the Golden Gate, as far as to the depot of San José. From this pretty half Spanish town Mount Hamilton lies distant, "as the crow flies," not farther than thirteen miles; but to reach Observatory Peak, where the colossal telescope is erected, and where the founder of the institution sleeps, implies a journey by coach over twenty-six miles of winding road, so steep is the range and so hard of access. The actual elevation of the summit on which the buildings stand is 4029 feet. It is one of the main eminences of that inner coast Sierra, called Monte Diablo, lying between the bays of San Francisco and of Monterey, and rising due eastward of San José.

Just as I was wondering which would be the best method of proceeding, a bright-eyed boy, some fifteen years of age, with a delightful manner of address and intelligence sparkling in his brown eyes, addressed me by name, having somehow satisfied himself as to my identity; and then announcing himself as the son of Professor Holden, Director of the Observatory, informed me that he was commissioned to take me in charge and to deliver me safely on the mountain, where his father had invited me to pass the night as his guest. A better guide it would have been impossible to have found. Glad of his sudden holiday from the San José school, and full to the brim with information about the mountain, my new friend did not allow a single moment of the journey to be dull or without profit.

A pair of sturdy California horses were soon harnessed to an open carriage, and off we went together through the great aloes and forest-trees of the city, and along the straight and well-kept road which leads to the foothills, passing farmhouses and well-kept fields, vineyards and orchards, in a country of splendid fertility. We talked natural history, sport and travel. He told me how he had trapped forty-two foxes last year upon the hills and two coyotes: he had killed, among many others, a rattlesnake with twelve rings in its tail; made me for the first time familiar with the California robin, the "wood runner," the black buzzard, the painted jay, and the ground squirrels, of which there were hundreds to be seen, and showed me the nest of a golden

eagle in the fork of a tall fir-tree, from which he had taken two eggs, so that by the time we had reached Smith's Creek, within eight miles of the top, we had become fast friends.

Up to this point, where we shared some lunch, the winding road had absorbed and entranced me by its beauty. Like a snake it coils in and out of lovely thickets and coppices of golden oak, pine and wild bay trees dressed and festooned with the Spanish moss. At every turn we gained fresh views of the green valleys, shut within the folds of the range—"canyons," as they are here called—some of them full of grazing herds, others devoted to vineyards, grain, crops, and orchards of peach and almond just breaking into tender rosy blossom. At Smith's Creek there occurs a flat, with houses and an inn; and a bridge here also crosses the "canyon," which brings you into the wilder and more stony regions of the upper heights, above which you see the iron dome of the Observatory now plainly towering. There are still, nevertheless, seven or eight miles of steep winding road to traverse, along the edge of a perpetual precipice; but the driver was skilful, the horses inured to the dangerous journey, and the road all the way most excellently made. Moreover, a message through the telephone, which runs all the way to the Observatory, had hospitably cheered us.

"I have got Sir Edwin!" my young friend blew triumphantly through the mouthpiece at Smith's Creek.

"Bring him along!" was the satisfactory reply, and with a fresh pair of horses we started again.

I noticed that a common English garden bloom, the escholtzia, grew everywhere as a weed on the rocks —people say that the Golden Gate gets its name from the Californian coast being bedecked with this bright flower when the first discoverers entered there. On these higher levels grow also freely the manzanita and the madrone, from the tough brown stems of which drinking cups and walking sticks are turned.

Plainer and plainer now looms the big dome on the upward gaze; more sterile the crags become and more "qualmy" the precipices as we wind higher and higher. We pass "Jack's Slide," an awful slope, where a Mexican teamster rolled over the edge with his waggon and mules, and brought up, alive but sorely bruised, five hundred feet below, between two big pine trees. We meet the "stage" coming down with four horses, for Saturday is the public day, when the sovereign people have the right to ascend in any numbers they please and gaze through the gigantic glass. It is early in the season, however, and there are few or no visitors to-day at the summit. We shall have the heavens to ourselves, and all the wonders of the proud temple of science this happy evening, which is as clear as purple crystal in the east, and in the west just beginning to prepare for the splendour of a gorgeous sunset.

Safely landed on the top, under the vast cupola

of the telescope, I am most cordially greeted by Professor Holden, and know in a moment that I shall like him as well as I already like his delightful boy. Truly the site of the Lick Observatory has been well chosen! It occupies the loftiest point of a long serrated chain, the various peaks of which have been appropriately named after the most renowned ancient and modern astronomers. Near at hand, for example, are "Kepler," "Copernicus," "Tycho Brahe," "Newton," "Huygens," "Herschel," and even "Ptolemy." The view all around is, of course, magnificently extended. To the eastward you look over a wilderness of rolling hills and embosomed valleys to where, one hundred miles away, the snow-capped line of the Sierra shuts the vast prospect in. Nearer to the eye, on the westward, spreads the immense Pacific main, but its shore-waters are veiled from the gaze by a row of foothills, which serve, nevertheless, an admirable purpose for the astronomers, since they intercept and catch the sea mists, and keep them from obscuring the upper sky. Even now, near to evening, a white shroud of clouds spreads all over the San José valley, completely closing out the spacious city and all the works of men there below.

To a great extent that twinkling of the stars which troubles the observer, and which is caused by the refraction of rarified lower air, has been avoided at Mount Hamilton by the happy selection which has interposed all this wide valley of San José between the ocean and the Observatory. Towards the

south and south-west your gaze travels over green canyons and grey rocky peaks, to the broad lowlands of Salinas, San Benito, and Monterey, and the lofty range of Pavilan. Lassen Peak, one hundred miles south of Mount Shasta, may sometimes be distinguished in the far north, but the giant mount itself is four hundred miles distant, and of course invisible at all times.

Turning reluctantly from that majestic landscape, one notes next the fine group of buildings erected on the solitary summit. The vast iron dome, within which the great equatorial telescope works, is the first thing to fasten attention. The lower part of this structure is of red bricks, and a considerable economy was effected herein by the discovery close at hand of a bed of clay, from which the bricks for the Observatory and adjacent buildings were all made. This saved the institution no less than $46,000, which would have been otherwise expended in purchasing the bricks below and hauling them up the steep twenty-seven miles of mountain roadway. That road itself—splendidly engineered, as has been said—was cut and finished by the Government of the State at a cost of $10,000, and links the isolated shrine of science with the busy world below by a long white wandering ribbon, which you see appearing and disappearing for many and many a league under your feet.

A range of official buildings connects the great Observatory with a lesser dome, containing a powerful but much smaller telescope than the equatorial;

while near at hand rise the very commodious residences of the director and his staff of assisting professors. Grouped around are the offices of the establishment, the cottages for the working-men, and the rooms for the photographing, carpentering, engineering, and all the various service of the mighty glass, while at a distance, under "Kepler," you observe the water-tanks where the rainfall is stored, and on the crest of that same peak a supplementary observatory. Water is naturally precious here, since sometimes long spells of dry weather occur, and a notice over every tap in Professor Holden's house bids the guest not to waste the element.

Would it be imagined that one of the principal nuisances of the place is the rattlesnake? For my own part, I had no idea that that noxious reptile could live at an elevation of over four thousand feet upon mountain crags so arid; but in the week before my visit they had killed three of these serpents within the great dome itself, and the director told me, sweeping his hand around a neighbouring canyon, "There are probably at this moment hundreds of rattlesnakes in that one hollow." They live upon squirrels, which abound everywhere, or small birds and their eggs, and come up to the tanks and Observatory buildings chiefly in quest of water. It was by the edge of a water-trough on the roadside that my young friend Edward Holden had killed three of the dangerous creatures.

I was told upon this topic something very curious about the "road runner," the bird already men-

tioned, which is also called the "chapparal cock." The rattlesnake is the deadly enemy of its species, always hunting about in the thickets for eggs and young birds, since the "road runner" builds its nest on the ground. When, therefore, the "chapparal cocks" find a "rattler" basking in the sun, they gather, I was assured, leaves of the prickly cactus and lay them in a circle all round the serpent, which cannot draw its belly over the sharp needles of these leaves. Thus imprisoned, the reptile is set upon by the birds and pecked or spurred to death.

But now we enter the great dome and stand under its cover beside the gigantic telescope given to America and to Science by James Lick, the Californian miner. The third clause of James Lick's second deed of trust (September 21, 1875), authorised the Board of Lick Trustees "to expend the sum of seven hundred thousand dollars ($700,000) for the purpose of purchasing land and constructing and putting up on such land as may be designated by the party of the first part a powerful telescope, superior to and more powerful than any telescope yet made."

Among the documents "engrossed on parchment, placed between two fine tanned skins backed with silk, shut again between two leaden plates, soldered securely in a tin box, and finally deposited within the coffin itself" of James Lick, which was laid in the foundation pier of the great equatorial telescope on the 9th day of January 1887, is one

recording that "this refracting telescope is the largest which has ever been constructed, and the astronomers who have tested it declare that its performance surpasses all other telescopes." The diameter of the great glass is 36 inches and its focal length 56 feet 2 inches, the weight of it amounting to several tons. Yet, as soon as Professor Campbell, the very accomplished lieutenant of Mr. Holden, has released the machinery, I am able with one hand to move the enormous weapon of science in either direction, revolving the whole structure of the cupola, and directing its broad slit—through which the huge object-glass looks forth like a Cyclopean eye—toward any quarter of the heavens. An extremely ingenious arrangement of wheels working upon oil chambers furnishes this indispensable mobility, and the spacious floor itself of the dome, circular in shape, can be also raised or lowered by turning a little hand-wheel. Against the eye-piece of the monstrous instrument is established a staircase, upon which you mount to a sliding seat, so as to be able always to keep a just position; and, for fine movements of latitude and longitude, small wheels, conveniently placed for the observer's control, permit him to sway the huge "optick" up or down, this side or that side, with the utmost ease and accuracy. The ironwork of this great cupola was furnished by Mr. Scott's firm at San Francisco —now engaged in constructing ironclad men-of-war for the United States Government—and appears to be of an excellent craft.

With my hand upon the colossal tube, lightly managing it, as if it were an opera-glass, and my gaze wandering round the splendidly equipped interior, full of all needful astronomical resources and built to stand a thousand storms, I think with admiration of its dead founder, and ask to see his tomb. It is placed immediately beneath the big telescope, which ascends and descends directly over the sarcophagus wherein repose the mortal relics of this remarkable man; a marble chest, bearing for inscription, "Here lies the body of James Lick."

From what I gather, he amassed his fortune chiefly by lucky mining speculations, and was led to dedicate a large portion of it to this noble purpose rather by vague, dreamy, transcendental ideas than upon strictly scientific grounds. He had come across some "spiritualistic" books, full of wild theories about life upon the moon and the planets, and the possibility of some day or somehow communicating with them, or at least of demonstrating the existence of "other races in other worlds." The bigger the glass the better the chance of this, he thought; and so the vast instrument was ordered of Alvan Clarke, and the trust formed. He would be disappointed, probably, if he could gaze through his own wonderful tube, and see how little it can do with stars and suns and far-off depths of space beyond the powers of a six-inch reflector, but it remains none the less a magnificent implement of astronomy, which has already accomplished marvellous work, and will effect more; while, to resolve double or triple stars, to

define nebulæ and study the lunar surface and the markings of planets and satellites, its capacity is far beyond all that science ever before possessed.

It was still broad daylight, however, and the time would not come until after darkness to enjoy the privilege of searching the heavens with that splendid memorial of the California miner. We wandered, therefore, from section to section of the buildings, examining apparatus, looking at vastly interesting photographs of the moon, of various planets, of nebulæ, and galaxies, and double stars, and at the dappled spectra of different celestial bodies.

Under the smaller cupola was fixed a heliostat, and Professor Campbell, quickly adjusting the reflector to the sinking sun, and holding a white card against the eye-piece, showed me a limb of the sun over which a spot was slowly moving. As he dexterously shifted the card this way and that, you could see the curious *faculæ* on the solar disc delicately reproduced, like the marks upon watered yellow satin, albeit these faint shadings were probably far-off aspects of fiery whirlpools and geysers, inconceivably enormous, unimaginably intense, in the blazing, seething, roaring garment of incandescent hydrogen worn by our central orb. Professor Holden made a remark here which lingers in my memory. I had been speaking of the curious suggestion of Lord Kelvin, to the effect that the first germ of life might have been conveyed to our planet upon a meteorite or small asteroid.

"I cannot think him in earnest," said my kind

and highly gifted host. "As a hypothetical idea it is perhaps defensible, but look at that spot on the sun! Ever since it appeared a short while ago, and while it has moved across the disc—a little freckle in seeming, but in reality a huge and terrible abyss in the photosphere, with awful forces at work around and within it—my magnetic needles have been perturbed by it. We are so close to the sources of life and light that everything is possible without any such far-fetched means. The whole universe is linked in mutual neighbourhood and mutual influence by the universal forces and laws. If life is anywhere, it is likely to be everywhere."

We dined four thousand feet above the sea mists enveloping San José, as satisfactorily as if in the plain; and drank the pious memory of James Lick in excellent "Crestabianca" of the Napa vineyards. I am of the opinion that California will some day supply the world with wine, if her vineyards can add to the purity which now happily distinguishes their products, education and character. As matters stand, the white Rieslings, Sauternes, and Crestas of the State are better than what France and Germany supply at twice the price; and the Zinfandel clarets and Schramberger Burgundies want only less youth and less of the soil to be as admirable as they are cheap. But "this is another story," as Mr. Rudyard Kipling has taught us to say.

After dinner the longed-for darkness had fallen upon the mountain; the last of the very few public visitors had departed; a glorious night of perfect

brilliancy and clearness drew its spangled curtain over the peak, and I repaired with my accomplished entertainers to the great cupola to pass some happy and privileged hours alone with the mighty Lick telescope, and with two among the skilful and devoted "Magi" who manage it, Professors Holden and Campbell.

Never shall I forget that memorable night! It was not that the huge weapon of science revealed so much that was new to me, but to hear the rich and deep astral wisdom of those learned astronomers, with the great glass under our touch to illustrate each subject, proved indeed an enjoyment. Like a 110-ton gun to look at—but, ah! how different in purpose and service—the colossal instrument reclined under our hands, peering broadly through the black embrasure of that slit in the cupola, obedient to the wheels and levers which moved it, as I have written, as though it had been a lady's lorgnette.

We had been talking much of La Place's famous nebula theory (widely accepted, though largely modified and expanded since his day), and Mr. Campbell deftly swung the huge telescope upon the nebula in Orion and bade me climb into the observing chair. That marvellous object of the heavens was full and clear in sight, defined with exquisite precision as it could be in no other place and with no other instrument. I saw, in the well-known region of "Beta Orionis," the vast separate system of that world of glory clearly outlined; a fleecy,

irregular, mysterious, windy shape, its edges whirled and curled like those of a storm-cloud, with stars and star clusters standing forth against the milky white background of the nebula, as if diamonds were lying upon silver cloth. The central star, which to the naked eye or to a telescope of low power looks single and of no great brilliancy, resolved itself, under the potent command of the Lick glass, into a splendid trapezium of four glittering orbs arranged very much like those of the Southern Cross. At the lower right-hand border of the beautiful cosmic mist there opens a black abyss of darkness, which has the appearance of an inky cloud about to swallow up the silvery filagree of the nebula, but this the great glass fills up with unsuspected stars when the photographing apparatus is fitted to it.

I had seen at Harvard College Observatory, under the gifted hands of Mr. Pickering, that fascinating operation by which all the black spaces of the sky are made in turn to yield up their secret of hidden suns and systems to the sensitised collodion film at the eye-piece of the telescope; and similar operations, with a view to map out the visible universe, are constantly in progress at Mount Hamilton. It was necessary from time to time to raise the sliding seat on the ladder in order to keep the glorious prospect of Orion's nebula in the field, but the lateral motion was easily governed by the wheel moving the dome. I understood Professor Holden's view to be that we were beholding, in that almost immeasurably

remote silvery haze, an entirely separated system of worlds and clusters, apart from all others, as our own system is, but inconceivably grander, larger, and more populous with suns and planets and their stellar allies.

Next we lightly turned the mighty astral weapon of Mr. James Lick to Sirius, and held the splendid star fast in its field—a white diamond of the darkness, incredibly clear, burning and brilliant. Yet those almost blinding rays by which it flashed its glory to our eyes had left its surface many years ago, and what we saw was but the light of Sirius emitted in about 1874, so that, for all our feeble wits can tell, the star may be extinguished long after we still continue to seem to behold it. I remarked to myself that, skilful as the labour of Alvan Clarke has been in preparing the three-foot lens, it is not, and indeed could not be, entirely achromatic. A faint tag of pale blue haunts the image of each star, and paints a pencilled azure ray emerging from its edge, so that there is therefore a supplementary lens, also of yard width, kept in the cupola, which can be fitted for photographic purposes. Of course, when I speak of the "image" and of the "edge" of a star seen in the field of vision of the great telescope, it must be understood that the Lick glass itself cannot show any disc even of the nearest or the brightest fixed star. These immensely remote suns—the closest of which is so distant that its rays occupy four years in reaching our earth—reveal themselves to the colossal instrument on

Mount Hamilton, as to all others, merely as a point of light.

But step by step astronomy wrests fresh secrets from the starry abysses, and far away as all those shining, mysterious worlds are which passed that night before my eyes, fastened to James Lick's magic lens, it is possible now—as everybody knows who knows anything at all about the matter—to settle the questions both of the matter composing them and also of the special rate of speed at which they are advancing toward this earth or receding from it. It is the wonderful spectroscope, in the hands of Dr. Huggins and others, which has not only largely revealed of late the physical constitution of stars, comets, and nebulæ, but added to bygone methods a totally new one of comparing proper motions in the heavenly bodies. Probably no star is really a "fixed star," and Shakespeare, with his usual miraculous omniscience, was right in making one of his characters say—

> There's not a single orb which thou beholdest,
> But in his motion like an angel sings.

Relatively they move so slowly, that in ten thousand years it is unlikely any visible alteration would be detected in such constellations as the Great Bear or Orion. Positively, they move with immense rapidity, and when this is in a direction toward or from the earth, the spectroscope can measure their rate of advance or retreat quite accurately. Sir Robert Ball has explained this very lucidly in a recent article,

and the explanation is so good an example of what I have styled "popularising the methods and facts of astronomy without degrading them," that I will venture to quote a passage from it. He writes:—

The logic of the new method is simple enough. Our eyes are so constituted that when a certain number of ethereal vibrations per second are received by the nerves of the retina, the brain interprets the effect to mean that a ray of, let us say, red light has entered the eye. A certain larger number of vibrations per second is similarly understood by the brain to imply the presence of blue light on the retina. Each particular hue of the spectrum—the red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet—is associated with a corresponding number of vibrations per second. It will thus be seen that the interpretation we put on any ray of light depends solely, as far as its hue is concerned, on the number of vibrations per second produced on the retina. Increase that number of vibrations in any way, then the hue shifts towards one nearer the blue end of the spectrum; decrease the number of vibrations per second, and the hue shifts along the spectrum in the opposite direction.

From these considerations it is apparent that the hue of a light, as interpreted by the eye, will undergo modification if the source from which the light radiates is moving toward us or moving from us. Let us suppose the existence of a star emitting light of a pure green colour corresponding to a tint near the middle of the spectrum. This star pours forth each second a certain number of vibrations appropriate to its particular colour, and if the star be at rest relatively to the eye, then, we assume, the vibrations will be received on the retina at the same intervals as those with which the star emits them. Consequently, we shall perceive the star to be green. But now suppose that the star is hurrying toward us; it follows that the number of vibrations received in a second by the eye will undergo an increase. For the relative movement is the same as if the earth were rushing toward the star. In this case we advance, as it were, to meet the waves, and consequently receive them at less intervals than if we were to wait for their arrival. Many illustrations can be given of the simple principle here involved. Suppose that a number of soldiers are walking past in single file,

and that while the observer stands still twenty soldiers a minute pass him. But now let him walk in the opposite direction to the soldiers, then, if his speed be as great as theirs, he will pass forty soldiers a minute instead of twenty. If his speed were half that of the soldiers, then he would pass thirty a minute, so that in fact the speed with which the observer is moving could be determined if he counts the number of soldiers that he passes per minute and makes a simple calculation. On the other hand, suppose that the observer walks in the same direction as the soldiers, if he maintains the same pace that they do, then it is plain that no soldiers at all pass him while he walks. If he moves at half their rate, then ten soldiers will pass him each minute. From these considerations it will be sufficiently apparent that if the earth and the star are approaching each other, more waves of light per second will be received on the retina than if their positions are relatively stationary. But the interpretation which the brain will put on this accession to the number of waves per second is that the hue of light is altered to some shade nearer the blue end of the spectrum. In fact, if we could conceive the velocity with which the bodies approached to be sufficiently augmented, the colour of the star would seem to change from green to blue, from blue to indigo, from indigo to violet; while, if the pace were still further increased, it is absolutely certain that the waves would be poured upon the retina with such rapidity that no nerves there present would be competent to deal with them, and the star would actually disappear from vision. It may, however, be remarked that the velocity required to produce such a condition as we have supposed is altogether in excess of any known velocities in the celestial movements. The actual changes in hue that the movements we meet with are competent to effect are much smaller than in the case given as an illustration.

On the other hand, we may consider the original green star and the earth to be moving apart from each other. The effect of this is that the number of waves poured into the eye is lessened, and accordingly the brain interprets this to imply that the hue of the star has shifted from the green to the red end of the spectrum. If the speed with which the bodies increase their distance be sufficiently large, the green may transform into a yellow, the yellow into an orange, the orange into a red; while a still greater velocity is, at all events, conceivable which would cause the undulations

to be received with such slowness that the nature of the light could no longer be interpreted by any nerves which the eye contains, and from the mere fact of its rapid motion away from us the star would become invisible. Here again we must add the remark that the actual velocities animating the heavenly bodies are not large enough to allow of the extreme results now indicated.

It is a fortunate circumstance that the lines in the spectrum afford a precise means of measuring the extent of the shift due to motion. If the movement of the star be toward us, then the whole system of lines is shifted toward the blue end, whereas it moves toward the red end when the star is hastening from us. The amount of the shift is a measure of the speed of the movement. This is the consideration which brings the process within the compass of practical astronomy. In the skilful hands of Vogel and Keeler, it is possible in favourable cases to obtain determinations of the velocities of objects in the line of sight with a degree of precision which leaves no greater margin for doubt than about five per cent of the total amount.

The Lick Observatory is very strong in spectroscopy. This fascinating study is there confided to most skilful hands, and I believe the astronomical world will be likely soon to hear some very remarkable developments in this branch from the Californian mountain, in connection with some discoveries in spectroscopic manipulation, strangely simple, yet most productive, hit upon lately by the staff. The "demon star" Algol, in the constellation of Perseus, has recently yielded up its secular secret to Vogel, armed with the spectroscope. It is known now that Algol advances toward us for thirty-four hours and retreats from us for the same period, and that this is the explanation of its strange variability of light, which is as if a heavenly lamp was alternately flashed and shaded. It is also proved that

Algol revolves round a dark companion which occasionally shuts off a portion of its luminosity. When we bear in mind the prodigious distances of the celestial ocean, these feats of astronomy magnificently exalt the dignity and demonstrate the power of man's intellect. It has been computed that the sun, which looms so large for us, would be to an observer on the nearest fixed star no plainer to behold than to our own eyes an eagle soaring at an altitude three times as great as the distance from Japan to New York! How little we are—and how large!

We turned the massive telescope from region to region of that

blue Pacific of Infinity.

At each new star-scape I heard, with an advantage and delight never to be forgotten, the elucidations, views, and conclusions of the learned and courteous gentlemen who took so much kindly interest in my "intelligent ignorance." Quite a long and lively discussion arose when the huge reflector was levelled at the new and astonishing star lately appearing in Auriga, which has blazed up so quickly and flickered into dimness again. They were watching and carefully measuring its variations of lustre at Lick, comparing it night after night with Polaris, by exposures ranging from two to one hundred seconds. It was Professor Holden's opinion that we were gazing there, amid the jewelled labyrinths of the Charioteer, at a world in fiery ruin, flaring to its utter destruction, its elements melting with heat unspeakable, its live things, if it possessed any, scorched to a white

annihilation. My erudite and kindly friend was inclined to be pessimistic at the spectacle.

"See! it is to this that all stars and systems—let alone planets and asteroids—must come at last. Can you find much ground for optimism in the sight?"

I was obstinate in my usual fixed faith—that destruction is reconstruction and all endings are only new beginnings. "Let the great Mother," I said, "cast her condemned or discharged materials into the crucible of change and work them up again to fresh miracles of beauty and evolution. Flame, and fury of liquefaction, and elements bubbling in the furnace of stellar collision, are only terrible to us because we think of them from notions of a burned finger and the boiling-point of Fahrenheit. To angelic intelligence the process may be gentle and pleasant to witness as the weaving of white satin. We talk of angels as ascending and descending in interplanetary space, where nevertheless the temperature must be three hundred degrees below zero! Do they therefore wear overcoats and blankets? I am not disconcerted by your heavenly fireworks."

Whereupon Astronomy smiled indulgently at Poetry.

From the great cupola we should have repaired to the smaller one, to see the spectra of stars being taken, and to measure the speed of a flying orb or two. But outside the door stood a lighted lantern, and that was a sign, not to be disregarded, that one of the professional staff was busy within, taking

stellar photographs. Like an African chief, who leaves his slippers and his spear outside the hut where he has sought the society of his mistress, one of the "Magi" of Lick was closeted there with Urania, and even Mr. Holden did not dare to enter. Deep is truly the debt of America first, and next, of all the civilised world, to these accomplished and devoted men, who on the summit of that lonely mountain work patiently through the clear suitable nights, noting and recording whatever is moving in the heavens, sleepless and faithful, sufficiently rewarded when

Some new planet swims into their ken.

They come to love their lofty work with a silent enthusiasm which the visitor will be quick to note. Lifted on high above the world and its petty pursuits, immersed in these noble and far-reaching studies, they contract a positive distaste for the commonplaces of existence, and are as happy as kings upon their rocky throne. The director told me that when any of his professors took leave of absence, they almost always returned long before the expiration of their term, unable to keep away from their peaceful and exalted temple of science. He himself had not left his learned eyrie for two months before accompanying me in my downward ride to San José. And sleeping that night in the deep tranquillity of the mountain crest, four thousand feet above railways and public readings, politics and publishers, I, too, felt that "it was good to be here," and half wished that I, too, might have a little taber-

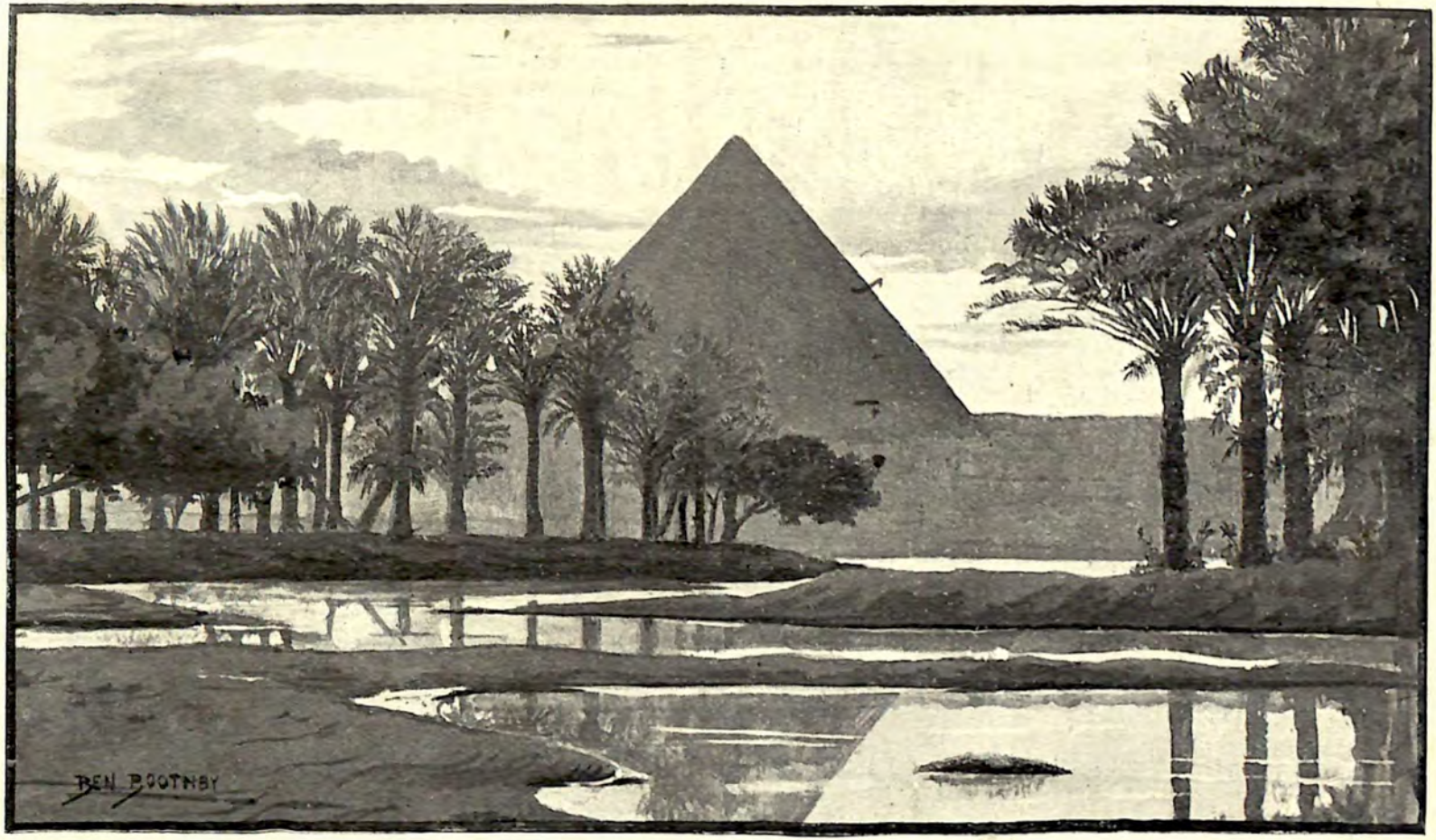
nacle builded to dwell therein with the wise men of Lick.

Would that there were words to describe the landscape which opened its loveliness in the morning before the blinking eyes of those high-minded nocturnal watchers and my own not less sleepy vision. Far and near, the undulating wilderness of peaks and canyons rolled at our feet. The light of dawn caught the snow on the Sierra and edged it with rosy colour, while the intervening deep hollows were all dark blue. Over the San José valley lay an unbroken sea of cloud, a vast silver shroud, covering up everything except a lofty foothill here and there. Black and idle the great telescope leaned forth in its iron embrasure, waiting again for the darkness, and the blinds were down in the bed-chambers of its nightly servitors.

Truly James Lick sleeps gloriously under the base of his big glass! Four thousand feet nearer heaven than any of his dead fellow-citizens, he is buried more grandly than any king or queen, and has a finer monument than their pyramids furnish to Cheops and Cephrenes. Nothing I had seen in the United States of America impressed me more than the institution founded by the California miner; and I descended the mountain, in the company of Professor Holden and his son, too full of admiration and meditation to pay much attention to the precipices alongside of which we recklessly rattled down, or to the exquisite prospects of hill and valley which make Monte Diabolo so varied and so fair.

III

AN ADVENTURE ON THE NILE



PYRAMIDS AT EVENING. *P.* 49.

III

AN ADVENTURE ON THE NILE

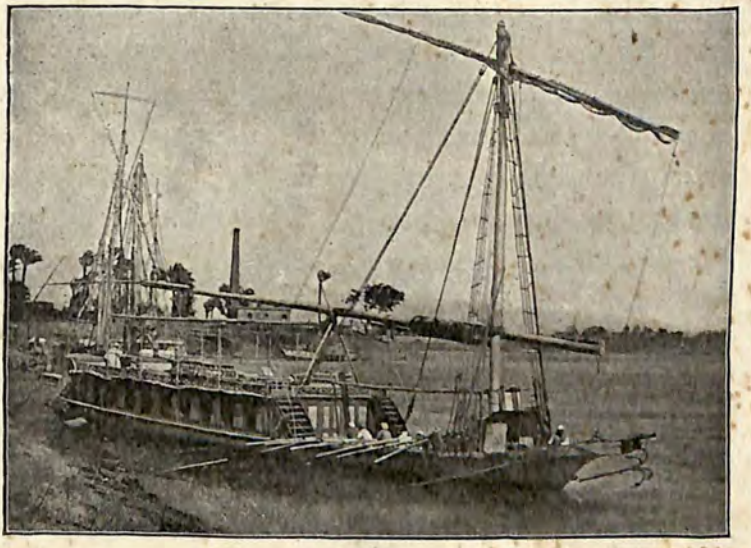
It is useful, as an educational experience, to have been so near to death as to see it face to face. This steadies the nerves for any subsequent incidents of life, and especially for that last and inevitable incident, when the end—which is also, of course, the fresh beginning—does really arrive. Once, in the course of holiday wanderings, it happened to me to come as near to finishing suddenly with the business of earthly existence as a man could well come, and yet finally escape alive; so that, since the story has some picturesque surroundings, it shall be narrated here.

We had arranged to sail up the Nile in a dahabeeah as far as the first cataract, perhaps even to the second. It is now about seven years ago since we set forth on that memorable journey, the party consisting of Lady Arnold, my second son Julian, and my only daughter, together with the writer of this. The climate of Cairo is delightful in winter, and it was no loss of time, but a most agreeable novelty—to at least three out of that happy four—to linger in the Egyptian capital while the necessary negotiations and arrangements were being made for our river trip. We lodged at the pleasant Hotel du Nil in

the "Muski," where the daily life of Cairo flows up and down the gay bazaar; and, though the city has become wofully altered since I remember the Esbekieh covered with Arab coffee-houses, and showing none of the new Frenchified buildings now defacing the Maidan, still Cairo, especially in her native quarters, is always interesting. A turn to the right or left hand in any one of the narrow, cool, silent lanes, will always take you at a plunge, as it were, into the scenery of the "Arabian Nights," where you shall meet one after the other Alnaschar, and Mesrour the Eunuch and the one-eyed Calendar, perhaps even a veiled princess going to her bath. Wandering on foot or by donkey in the "silver street;" or up the alley, called by dragomans "the smelly bazaar," where attar of roses, myrrh, gum labanum and civet make the warm atmosphere delicious; or among the booths, where they sell shawls and pipes, tobacco and embroidery; all this amused sufficiently the ladies, while I transacted our river-side affairs. It was late in the season to select a dahabeeah. The best were already all engaged, and I had to be content with the *Bedouin*, a craft of five cabins, with a *jenin*, or garden, and an upper deck; an old but not a bad boat, which had been up and down the ancient river so often that no one could have dreamed we were destined to charter her for the last of her voyages.

A dahabeeah is a large, flat-bottomed vessel of wide beam, with a mainmast and a short mizen, upon the former of which is hoisted the great

lateen sail, with its long and towering yard of lashed bamboos. These Nile boats look extremely graceful, and even imposing, skimming the stream with their vast white or striped wings outspread, the point of the braced yard forking high up into the sky, and always terminated by a pretty filigree-work pennon, with a bit of gay coloured silk bear-



DAHABEEAH ON THE NILE.

ing the name of the ship. Our ill-fated, but not unhandsome, craft had an ample waist for the sailors, and a cook's galley midships, with two cabins on either side of the passage going aft, as well as another commodious stateroom in the extreme stern. The roof of these cabins formed an upper deck, protected by an awning and approached

by a flight of steps, where it was very nice to walk or sit, as the *Bedouin* glided before the wind, or was lazily towed against the current by a party of the sailors.

She was well provided with all needful furniture, and our dragoman, who bore the name of Khalil, given anciently to Abraham, and meaning "The Friend of God"—an inherited appellation wholly undeserved—set to work to provision her for the trip. Besides all sorts of tinned and canned goods and groceries, there were coops full of turkeys and chickens to put on board, along with the bread for the Arab crew, which bread they chopped into small pieces, and spread for two whole days upon the upper deck to dry in the sun. Sheep and eggs and fruit could be procured as we sailed along. Guns, clothes, rugs, books and drawing materials were not forgotten, the latter particularly, for Lady Arnold was an accomplished artist, and the pure atmosphere and brilliant hues of Nile landscapes make everybody wish to preserve some more or less faithful memoranda of them. We agreed to take the captain and the crew already attached to the ship, upon the guarantee of recommendatory letters from previous employers; and hired in the city a skilful Syrian cook, very clever at curries, with a bright, serviceable young body-servant named Ali, as well as a pretty Egyptian boy called Mustapha. The captain, or Reïs, was a charming old navigator, whom we soon grew to like and to call affectionately "Aunt Mary," for his gentle ways.

The crew consisted of about seventeen hands,

docile and friendly Egyptians, full of quiet mischief, and fairly ready to do the hard work of the voyage, which is occasionally very hard indeed, since the men have to jump overboard every now and then to push the vessel off sandbanks, to watch and trim and furl the huge lateen sail, and for hours together to toil along the bank with the tow-rope braced round their shoulders, dragging the ponderous and lazy craft along at about a mile and a half or two miles per hour. A very serious and elaborate document has to be signed before embarking, between the hirer and the captain, specifying the sums to be paid and the dates of payment, with certain pledges of "backsheesh" or presents in money if all goes well and satisfactorily. As will be seen, the *Bedouin* was fated never to return. The decree of the god Hâpi was written that she should leave her bones in the bed of his Nile, among all the countless wrecks of ancient and modern craft—Ptolemœan galleys and Nubian "buglas"—which must fill the hidden slime of the "Father of Waters." But of this dark edict of the river deity we happily knew nothing, and never was any party more joyous or full of anticipated pleasure than ours when we went finally on board and settled down for a start, the red ensign of England fluttering at the mainmast, and the bright little name-pennon at the point of the lateen yard.

Sailing the Nile thus, day after day, is surely the very "cream of the cream" of travelling, with a good dahabeeah, a well-fitted company of holiday-makers and a rightly chosen crew. Our ship,

though old, was stanch and comfortable; our party perfect in harmony and numbers, and the hands won daily more and more our patience and attachment, as we learned to put up with their absurd little foibles and to make the most of their simple virtues. They would "say the thing which is not" with the most reckless inaccuracy and the wildest imaginativeness, and would invent the most humorously false and flagitious excuses to linger at a pleasant spot, and so cause our social arrangements to fit in with their own, for they had friends at every station. But as we were in no sort of hurry, their stratagems suited our idle programme well, and very quickly we all got on together quite perfectly. They would do anything and everything at last for the Sitt and the Sittina, and since my Turkish decorations gave me the status of a pacha, they were full of the necessary respect for the "effendi."

Three or four among their number gained our especial favour: a strong, good-tempered Arab named "Salim"—whom we almost instantly re-christened "The Buffalo;" a tall, graceful Nubian lad, called "Moya;" a one-eyed Egyptian sailor, known as Hassan, who wore a red loin-cloth and was dubbed "Scarlet Fever;" the boy Mustapha, and Ali, the cabin servant. There came, moreover, a black kitten on board, nicknamed "Sheitan," or the Devil, to which the sailors objected as being unlucky, but this feeling was rashly overruled. As for the weather, that indispensable factor in a happy water trip,

there was no need to be anxious about it. The Egyptian winter is splendid for steady brilliancy of sky and pleasantness of temperature, a little too much cooled, perhaps, each morning when the north wind blows. But that breeze lulls as the sun draws westward; and evening after evening the sunsets on the Nile are beyond all description lovely and inexhaustible in combination of tender and beautiful tints. Night after night the ancient god Ra sank to his couch in robes of more glorious magnificence than we had before seen, so that the hour of his declination and departure was a regular rendezvous on the upper deck for us all; and while Lady Arnold would seek to fix some of the divine blendings of gold and crimson, amber and purple, turquoise green and silvery grey painting the west, the Reïs was on his knees and nose saying his evening prayer toward Mecca, and half the crew would be cooking the last meal, while the other half tramped the broken bank with the tow-rope over their brown shoulders, singing some song of the Nile, not always too decent if faithfully translated.

The simplicity of manners to which one has to be accustomed in Nile travelling is, in truth, a little startling at first. Our men, like all the other sailors of the river, would at any moment strip stark naked to plunge in the river or to handle the tow-rope, and the best way for those who objected, or who endeavoured in vain to make them wear drawers, was to regard their brown skin as a real dress, of which

indeed it gives the idea. The improprieties of Arab talk were, however, veiled to most ears, and the river-songs at night or when hauling on the warps are mostly as innocent as they are melodious.

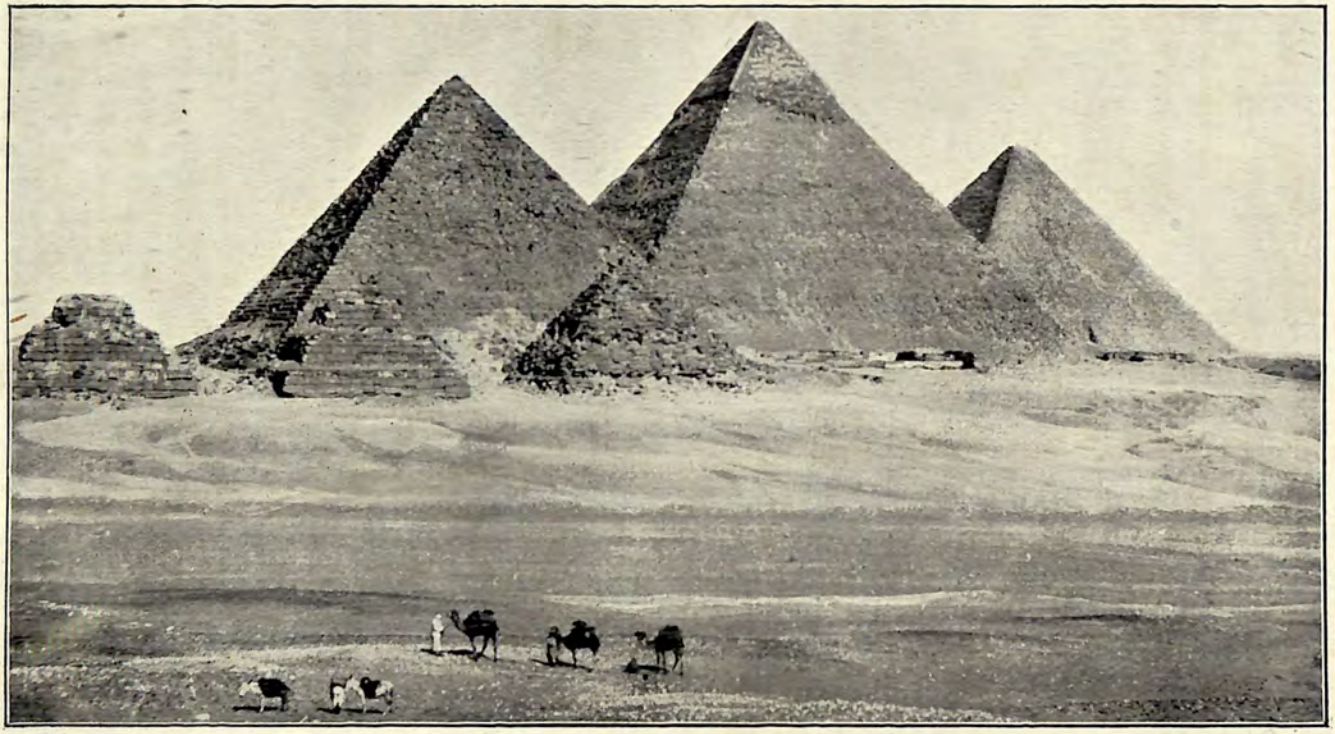
It is the golden dream of travelling, I say, to glide along day after day upon that antique water channel between the two strips of brilliant fertility which mark the range of the yearly inundation creating and recreating Egypt. Justly has the old chronicler Herodotus said that "Egypt is the gift of the Nile." Exactly so much of the desert valley lying between the yellow sunburned hills as the wave of the life-giving stream can touch, by flood or artificial irrigation, is transformed as if by magic from a waste to a paradise. One does not realise what water is to the earth until many a stroll has been taken along those emerald strips of barley and millet fields, and those long, waving groves of palm-trees, which embroider the Nile all the way from Cairo to the second cataract, and, indeed, much higher. In a thousand spots you may stand in Middle and Upper Egypt with one foot deep in rich, verdant growing crops, and the other buried in barren sands. The line is as sharp between the fertility and the sterility as between the water and the bank; in truth, the mid-river itself is accompanied throughout its course by these two sister streams of eternal fecundity, and Egypt is that ever-gleaming ribbon of blue with green edges, now widening, now diminishing, which meanders, always bright and glad, in the heart of the hot desert, from Korosko to the Delta.

It is a supreme pleasure, I repeat, to make your way day after day up the grand old river in a well-found Nile boat, with pleasant company and a good, willing, friendly crew. In the early morning, before the sun has cleared the hills which shut us from the Red Sea, the dahabeeah spreads the great white wing of her "trinkeet" if there be any serviceable breeze, and gracefully resumes her daily task of stemming the perpetual downward current of the river. The scene is then charming. The fair Egyptian dawn has broken, pearly and roseate. The stream is alive with water-birds—cranes, pelicans, wild geese and ibis—whose happy cries fill the air. Numerous native boats, of the strangest build and rig, with tattered but picturesque sails, go up and down laden with heaped-up grain or chopped fodder or sheaves of sugar-cane and maize. Their swarthy crews, in white or blue gowns and red "tarbooshes," make water-pictures which you long to preserve; while upon the bank an endless procession passes all day of equally artistic figures—peasant people, merchants, Arabs, Turkish officials, soldiers and boatmen, all seen in sharp silhouette against the clear azure of the western sky.

The river, never running far in one and the same direction, constantly shifts the point of view, and so makes a succession of delightful combinations out of the otherwise changeless features of the Nile landscape—the yellow desert hills, the strips of sand waste at their feet, the broad or narrow belts of cultivation, the raised banks, and the shining channel.

At every few miles a minaret, jutting its delicate white needle into the air above the palm-groves, or a fleet of little cargo-boats fastened to the shore, betoken a village, which will look like a rubbish heap alive with human insects, so humble in architecture are the huts of mud with their flat roofs of maize and dhoura straw, and so all alike the inhabitants, in white and blue, swarming about them.

You have left behind at Gizeh the last of the great group of pyramids, but now and again the hills on the eastern side show ranges of square black holes hewn in the limestone or granite, which are entrances to ancient tombs; and wherever these are numerous or famous you will probably land to examine some of them. Then will you perceive—in climbing from the palm-grove to the breast of the yellow crag—what a fast faith those ancient Egyptians of the Pharaohs had in the immortal life of the soul. Otherwise they would not have cut away the solid rock so patiently into smooth, roomy, imperishable chambers, to deposit therein two or three bodies at most, against such time as the respective souls belonging to them, their fated wanderings completed, should come back to look for and to resume the earthly tenement. Joyous and confident paintings on the tomb wall, as fresh in this dry, pure air as though drawn and coloured a week, and not three thousand years ago, symbolise the happy future of the justified dead. The tombs are now all rifled, and the patient mummies are gone—some to museums, some to be manure for farmers or pig-



THE PYRAMIDS OF GIZEH. *P.* 58.

ments for artists, since there is quite a large trade done to-day in Nile mummy dust for fertilising, and for a special brown tint much employed by oil painters. Yet the significance of those antique, rock-hewn graves is the same. It was the land of resolute belief, the land of an assured and universal conviction that man's real existence is eternal, of which every one of these elaborately excavated sepulchres is a monument, noble and pathetic. As I myself have written to the mummy of an Egyptian lady, whose burial-chest we opened, to find only her dust and her slippers—

> You were born in the Egypt that did not doubt;
> You were never sad with our new-fashioned sorrows;
> You were sure, when your playtimes on earth ran out,
> Of playtimes to come, as we of our morrows.
> Oh! wise little maid of the Delta! . . . .

The pyramids themselves are mighty witnesses of the same firm belief, being, as they were, gigantic caskets, with astronomical and geodetical meanings, constructed to preserve the dead body of the king, until His Majesty's soul had need of it for a new earthly existence.

What with such occasional landings to explore tombs, to shoot hares and palm-doves, and to get necessary exercise; and what with the strong current and the slow pace of these broad-beamed, flat-bottomed Nile boats, it is not very much progress that you will make in any one day. From twenty-five to forty-five miles may be taken as the rate, and this absence of hurry and this daily sedate advance

suit well the genius of the land and the atmosphere of peace and philosophy which surrounds the dahabeeah. Never for a moment is the properly constituted mind bored upon that marvellous and delightful river. You can read or sketch or write, sitting on the upper deck under the striped awning, with the pretty water-wagtails of the Nile running about between your feet, and the solemn Reïs ascending now and again to say his prayers toward Mecca, at noon, or at the "Azan," which is our "four-o'clock tea." The crew alone would be a perpetually interesting study to a close observer; ours certainly proved so, especially when they found out that we liked them to dance and be happy in their own way. If, as often happens, there is no wind, overboard go half-a-dozen of the brown "hands," rolling up their blue coats to their armpits, and the tow-rope is rigged and hauled for hours and hours. Should a lively puff of breeze arise, helter-skelter they rush for the boat, leap and scramble on board, hoist the huge lateen sail, and away the little ship buzzes once more, churning the Nile into cream below her square bows. But you must never allow the main sheet to be made fast. A trusted sailor must constantly squat on the deck holding that in his hands, with half a hitch only round the cleat, and at the moment when the helmsman cries "*Khalis!*" ("Loosen!") he must let the sheet run. Otherwise the dahabeeah will surely capsize. I was very particular and careful, indeed, upon this point, being an old yachtsman, and it was not from any neglect as

to the main sheet that our catastrophe, soon to be related, befell.

In the delicious afternoon, as the sun sinks nearer the western horizon, casting long shadows from the palm stems, the river grows more and more entrancing. The north wind, which ofttimes blows hard, and even cold, in the forenoon, is lulled. The chief work of the "*shadoufs*"—the water-wheels—is done, and their shrill creaking no longer so much grieves the sensitive ear. The buffaloes, released from the slow toil of turning the pole, go homeward with the goats and chickens. Long lines of wild geese, flamingoes, pelicans, and vast flocks of blue pigeons streak or cloud the sky, now gradually assuming toward its western border a delicate tint of turquoise green—nay, more decidedly green than that—a veritable *ciel de Nil* colour, upon which the gathering cloudlets of the early evening lie in soft masses of silver and gold and violet. The cook begins to be busy with his charcoal fires, and the Arab crew gets ready the mooring ropes and pins. Down drops the last faint breeze, and some of them must plunge overboard again to drag the dahabeeah to her berth for the night, under the palms of the village. As we pull and pole the sluggish vessel to her resting-place, the ever-crumbling bank of the river tumbles in large fat masses of black soil, with loud splash, into that current which is always eating up the Egypt that it has created.

The ship is laid alongside the shore, pegs are driven into the bank and ropes made fast to them,

stem and stern; a plank is cast from the deck to the land, and your floating home is as quiet as a church, under the mud-ledge. From the town or the village now come down coffee-coloured loafers to chat and question, together with women in long dark blue gowns, veiled and barefooted, bearing vessels of milk, grain, fruits, and tobacco leaves. The sky has lost the sun and has become a curtain of soft heavenly glory, through which the first stars twinkle. Opposite the sunset, the east is lighted with the lively and wonderful colours of the "afterglow." The old captain is finishing his evening prayer upon his little carpet by our side. The "gaffer," the official watchman, with long staff and head-cloth, approaches solemnly and sits on the bank to take charge of the safety of the ship. Dinner and the divinely placid Egyptian night ensue; and, while the Arab crew dance and beat their drums in the light of the paper lanterns, and you smoke the long narghileh and sip the perfectly prepared coffee, your wish is that the ancient and majestic stream would run for ever and for ever from the southward in the same tranquil manner, and that you could go on stemming it for ever and for ever in the same daily and delightful peace and ease.

We had sailed and tracked the Nile thus for twenty-one days, each day adding to the agreeable experiences and growing contentments of the voyage, and increasing our friendship with the crew, particularly those heretofore named, and the dear old Reïs. Lady Arnold had been very kind to that

venerable Arab, giving him tea and pills when out of sorts; and Reïs Achmet had come to regard her with deep loyalty, though they could exchange no words of conversation. My son Julian, an enthusiastic sportsman, had shot much game for the men, and my daughter had made special and devoted adherents of Ali, the boy, as well as of Mustapha, and of a sick Egyptian to whom we had given a passage. The black cat had been transferred to a passing grain-boat troubled with rats, and all seemed fair and favourable. But now we were doomed to realise the truth of that Arabic word, *yasoul—i.e.*, "it will come to an end;" and very nearly indeed, as will be seen, did we also, and all the nineteen Egyptians attending us, come to an end along with those too happy days.

It was an object, that luckless January morning, to start early and make the whole run to Girgeh, a considerable town, where we were to take in new supplies, and where we had arranged to reward the good service of the crew with a sheep for a feast and a "*fantasia*" of dancing and fireworks. Accordingly, though a rather too fresh wind was blowing, I rose early, and, after consulting the captain, gave word to start. My wife and son and daughter were still in their cabins, and we had thus far only sailed about half a league. Coming under some high red cliffs of sandstone on the eastern shore, named Jebel-esh-Sheikh, I was on the upper deck watching to see that Selim did not make fast for one moment the sheet, the Reïs was giving directions for the course, and his next in command was steering, when, on a

sudden, a fury of wind fell from the desert ledge high overhead upon the lofty lateen sail, sweeping at the same time across the breadth of the river, which it lashed into white tumult. The little ship heeled over, and I rushed down from the upper deck to help let fly everything and get the sail reefed. As she righted and rocked over the other way my wife came hurriedly and half dressed out of the cabins, from which my son and daughter had not yet emerged, and called to me in alarm. I was saying something conventional to reassure her, when another blast laid the dahabeeah violently down, and my cook, apparently just risen from sleep, toppled and fell overboard. Obeying an instinct to render him help, I flung myself across the gunwale of the *Bedouin* to clutch and save him, but missed his hand, and was throwing the bight of a rope toward his sinking form, while I could feel my wife seizing my coat from behind to keep me from going overboard, when the ship seemed suddenly to rear up and plunge, and the next moment we were all hurled pellmell into the river, the hull rolling right over and the big sail lying flat upon the water. Gear, poultry coops, oars, cordage, sailors, water jars, everything and everybody, with one or two exceptions, were violently flung forth from the dahabeeah into the turbulent river waves, in such a helpless and sudden confusion and horror of calamity that it gives me a thrill, even now, to write of that wild moment.

My part in the miserable instant was to see my wife sinking at my side, to fling one arm round her

waist and seize her wrist, while striking out for the wreck with the other. A coop of drowning poultry under my left elbow enabled me to support her and bring her to the hull, upon which several of the sailors had already scrambled up from the water; and these men, in obedience to my call, drew Lady Arnold upon the keel. I could not lift myself up there, being too exhausted, but clung to the ship, and hearing my son, an excellent swimmer, in the river near me calling to his sister, I exclaimed despairingly, "She is dying under the dahabeeah!" But as soon as I found strength to raise myself out of the water upon the side of the Bedouin, there was my daughter sitting in her night-dress, having escaped by coolness and good fortune through her cabin window. This sight greatly inspired me, especially as I also saw my son Julian just then dragging the old Arab captain out of the river. In effect, all but the drowned cook had by this time crawled back upon the vessel's bilge, and there was a chance to save at least the ladies before she should fill and founder. I shouted to the men, therefore, to cease their ridiculous lamentations and useless curses, and to listen to orders.

Never did I behold such a limp, miserable, hopeless lot as my smart Egyptians had become. They wept, they tore their clothes, they threw their turbans into the waves. They were most of them abjectly useless and nerveless. "*Attini felucca, ya Reïs,*" I cried ("Give me the little boat"), for we had a dingey towing astern, which had not capsized and was now

our only hope. "*Felucca mafeesh*," the old gentleman plaintively cried, pointing to the thick manilla rope holding the skiff, the knot of which was far under water, so that to get the little boat we must cut that thick cord. "*Sikkin, sikkin!*"—"A knife, a knife!" I called out impatiently, but nobody produced one until Julian drew from his pocket Lady Arnold's little one-bladed penknife, truly a poor affair for such a crisis. I tried; Salim tried; my son tried to sever the manilla with that tiny blade, while the wretched log of a ship was steadily settling down with us in mid-stream. At last, seeing that the others would break the blade, I regained it, and, strand by strand, I painfully cut that rope through; and then, after sternly checking an egotistical desire of some of my Arabs to take the first seats on the skiff—by knocking them overboard again—the two ladies, three of my best sailors, the boy Mustapha, and the sick Arab to whom we were giving a passage, with Ali, were all put in, and glad I was to thrust them safely off from the ship, tossing into the boat some of the floating oars. Of course they all cried to us—myself and my son—to come; but that was inadmissible. Had we gone, the others would have justly wished to escape also, and the felucca must then have been swamped.

Rejoiced indeed we were to see them draw clear from the wreck and pull out of the broken water, while the hapless *Bedouin*, relieved of the weight of eight persons, now floated a little higher in the water, on her side, and might possibly continue to float until we touched one or other shore. To cut a sad tale

short, she did continue to drift down-stream with us for some two miles, finally touching land at a sand point, where we all sprang off and tried to hold her with a rope round a palm-tree stump. But the rope broke; the hull, now almost full of water, whirled madly away, and sank out of sight in a deep bend of the Nile, about a quarter of a mile lower.

I had got my poor Egyptians well in hand long before this time, aided by the eloquent scorn which the Reïs expressed for their conduct, and by the good example set them by my son, who had behaved throughout, of course, like a true English lad, admirably. They were touchingly grateful to be still alive, especially the bad swimmers, and bitterly ashamed of such childish despair as they had exhibited. But, truly, the fix was ugly enough at its worst, and although the strongest swimmers might perhaps have got to shore, the majority of us must have perished if the felucca had not been freed and the wreck lightened sufficiently to float a little longer, as it did. I was grateful for having boated every day at Oxford, and glad that Julian had studied swimming more than conic sections at Marlborough.

By-and-bye Selim and "the Buffalo" brought the boat over to us, and Julian and I rejoined the unhappy ladies, who supposed themselves to have lost sight of us for ever. The Reïs was to march his men up the left bank to Girgeh. We landed on the right bank to find our forlorn castaways sitting under a red rock drying what garments they possessed. We were in an uninhabited spot

—a naked, unvisited desert, six miles from the nearest village — with only one pair of slippers among the party. But it was sweet to be still living, and the laborious march across the sands proved even a joyous one. The hot Nile sun soon dried our clothes, and with limping feet we reached an Arab hamlet, where the women put warm, dry native dresses on Lady Arnold and Miss Arnold, while the old Sheikh lent his own pipe to myself and my son, and caused provision of parched pulse and melted butter to be served to us. The fellaheen whom I had caught on the road, and despatched up and down the river-banks with messages of our luckless plight, soon found American and English friends at Girgeh, and after a long day in the Egyptian huts a boat came down and fetched us to the friendly shelter of the dahabeeahs at that town. Boundless was the kindness we received; lavish the help proffered in the shape of garments, dresses, shoes, &c., and truly dire was our need, for of that well-stored *Bedouin* and the £300 or £400 in ready cash on board her, only about seventy piastres remained in my saturated pockets when I turned them out that night.

We all found hospitable asylum, and my son, indeed, afterwards completed his voyage to the second cataracts, wearing the clothes of the late Lord Henry Lennox and of a Boston friend. I returned to Cairo in the shoes of a kind Dutch gentleman and in an Arab dress, my wife and my daughter also wearing borrowed plumes. That night the lady doctors on board the dahabeeah *Rachel* were for

some time puzzled by a broad black mark on my wife's wrist. Suddenly she remembered that it was where I had gripped her in the water at that abominable and hopeless moment when we were all flung into the Nile, like gooseberries from a basket. I held her more tightly than I knew.

One little incident I must append to the dismal recital, because it reflects well upon Arab politeness, and I am so sorry to have had to record the ill-behaviour of our theretofore nice Egyptian crew. At the instant when the *Bedouin* was reeling to her fate, the old Reïs, "Aunt Mary," approached Lady Arnold, and respectfully raising her hand to his lips, kissed it, and then drew his "kefieh" over his eyes, to die. It was his supreme and grateful farewell! Not even in the moment of death would this true Arab gentleman fail in courtesy, especially since, in his idea, the kind "Sitti" was going, as an unbeliever—not to Paradise, like himself—but "elsewhere." It was the touch of Oriental grace and honour which redeemed for me the ugly business, and I am glad to finish my Nile story with that pretty action of the captain of the *Bedouin*.

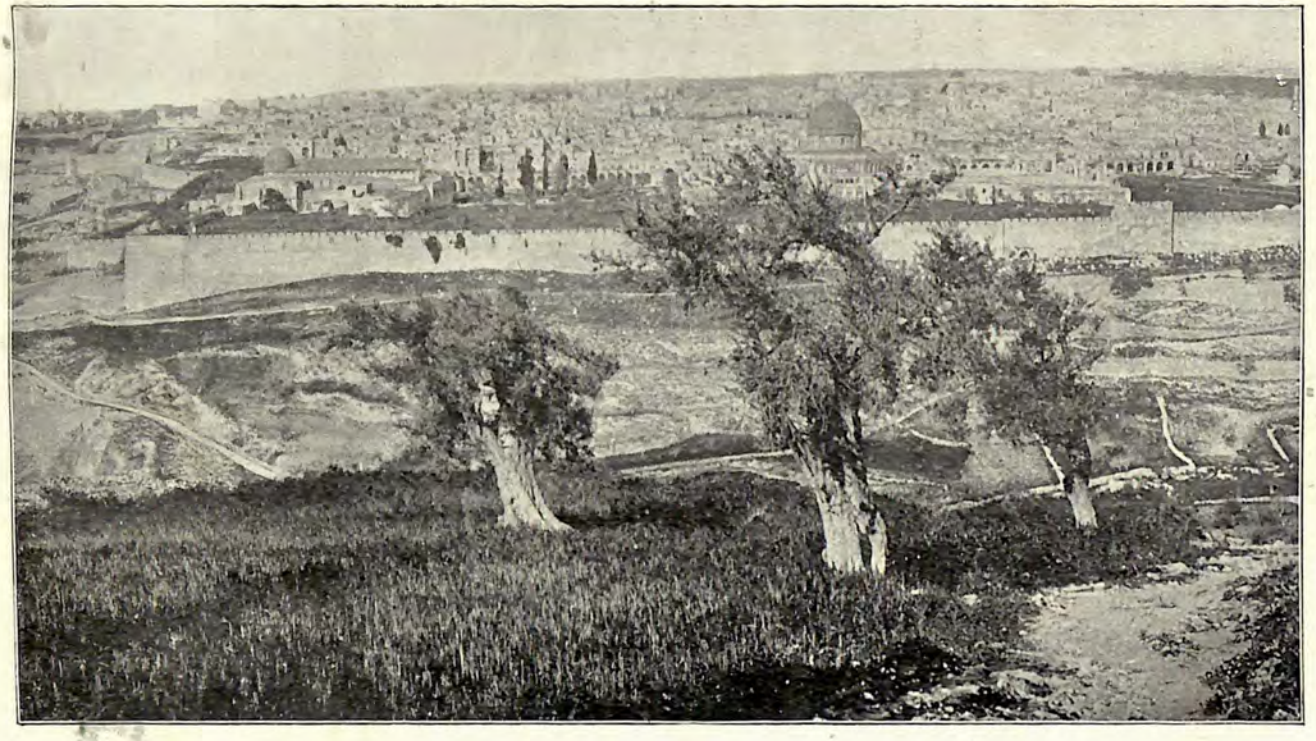
I sent a Greek diver afterward to the wreck, but I suppose he soon found my bag of sovereigns and went off with it, for he reported that the ghost of my cook and other dreadful "Afreets" haunted the spot, and that he could and would search no more. The *Bedouin* has long ago disappeared in the muddy bed of the Nile, but her fate is still a legend of the Nile. For myself, I do not wish to experience

another moment like that when the sail of the dahabeeah lay flat on the water like the wing of a wounded pelican, and the Nile seemed to lift up and drag away my limbs like shreds of river-grass. But it was indignation and swift meditation of resource which occupied my mind. I am persuaded a man has no time to be frightened in such emergencies. I felt no fear and had leisure to feel none, but I was furiously angry, and the anger was useful in controlling my helpless Egyptians, and saving a score or so of human lives.

EVENING ON THE NILE.

IV

IN THE HOLY LAND



JERUSALEM FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES. *P.* 73.

IV

IN THE HOLY LAND

AMONG all the experiences of travel, none, I think, more deeply impresses the mind or lingers longer in its memories than a journey through Palestine. First of all, the country itself is, in its character and natural aspects, extremely interesting. *Esh Shams*—as the Syrians themselves call it—"the land of the sun," sits well for climate, history, and influence, on the eastern edge of the great Midland Sea, the centre of so many empires; which, seen from Carmel or any spot along the coasts thereabout, is almost always of a heavenly blue colour, changing at sunset to that deep purple tint which Homer called the "wine-dark wave." Next, while various regions of travel present here and there points of ethnological or religious attraction, in Palestine every site, every rock, every hill, every valley and stream is full of associations of the most extraordinary and absorbing kind, inextricably blended with the concerns of humanity. Sail down the shores of Asia Minor from Smyrna, where Polycarp was burned by edict of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius; past the seats of the "Seven Churches" to the little Isle of Patmos, steep and rugged and gloomy, where St. John found a fit

dreaming place for writing his Apocalypse; to Mersina, which was Tarsus, the birthplace of St. Paul, and to Alexandretta, which is close to the River Granicus, where Alexander the Great broke up the Persian Empire; past the mouth of the "silver Cydnus," on whose channel Cleopatra met Antony, and past the Bahr-el-Kelb, where the rocks bear the inscriptions of Sennacherib; on to Beirout, under the majestic Lebanon—the Lebanon of King Hiram of Tyre and of Solomon. All that long way the wanderer's thoughts grow more and more full of the records of those events which helped or hindered the spread of Christianity, and so become ripe for disembarking with him in Palestine and traversing "the paths that Christ hath trod." From Beirout to Jerusalem and Bethlehem and Hebron, all through that narrow but hallowed land, every step taken in its interior becomes an emotion, a revelation, an illumination. At every stage you are vividly led to comprehend, as was never possible before, the details and surroundings of the simple but sublime Oriental story which has conquered and remoulded the civilised world. Here, on the slopes of Lebanon, as you slowly climb them by the Damascus road, grow the "locusts" of St. John, the caroub tree, with its pods of sweet beans, though, indeed, he may well have eaten, as I have done, the insect itself, fried in butter. In "Hollow Syria" you shall see the "Cedars of Lebanon," and that wonderful chaos of ruined beauty and splendour, "Tadmor of the

Wilderness," coming upon the Temple by paths where every bush and flower is a picture fitted to Holy Writ. Thence you ride down to the white and outspread city of Damascus, immensely ancient, and so fair with its environing apricot gardens and green watercourses, that the Prophet Mohammed is said to have turned his eyes away from it at first sight in order "that he might not forget Paradise." Here you shall be shown the "street that is called Straight," where St. Paul was healed of his blindness; the spot on the road where he encountered the heavenly vision; and the gate from which he was let down in a basket.

I remember breakfasting there with some Bedawee Arabs, whose coffee was the finest that could be tasted, and manners the most polished that could be beheld, though they were a cut-throat set of gentry, and had come to pay a tribe fine to the Governor for a plundered caravan in the Hauran. On the same day I entered the little village of the lepers, close by, and sat long with the sad victims of that mysterious Scriptural malady, asking many questions about it of the sufferers, to the horror of my dragoman, who would not accompany me into the unclean place, but, nevertheless, to my own considerable profit and information. I do not think that leprosy is to any general degree communicable by contact. It is very prevalent in Syria, as in many countries of Asia, but more, it always seemed to me, by personal constitution or actual inheritance than by contagion or infection.

The hapless lepers reminded us of the Great Healer, whose name is stamped everywhere upon the land, and, indeed, as you pass southward from Damascus and come to the sources of the Jordan at Banias, in the country of the tribe of Dan, it is, at each new day's journey, as though the very pages of the Evangelists turned one by one before your eyes, with comments made by the hand of nature and the voice of the desolate country itself. All through one morning's ride you will be rounding the green breast of Tabor, and threading the oak groves of that great and famous mountain which looks down the whole long vista of the valley of the Jordan, and can be seen from end to end of the little territory of Palestine. For very small, *mesquin*, petty, parochial, the Holy Land is. The least of the big American States would swallow it up entirely. It is inferior, I suppose, in area to Vermont or Rhode Island, and therefore so intensely condensed in historical associations that they indeed succeed each other too rapidly for full realisation. Hardly have you ridden out of the country of the Judges, and finished thinking of Deborah and Barak and Sisera, before Carmel rises out of the sea at your right hand, and you are absorbed in recalling Elijah and Elisha and the prophets of Baal, while to the left, beyond Jordan, lies Bashan, and the "Country of the Giants," suggesting fresh lines of reminiscence.

Only half a day's ride farther—by hills that seem to stand up proclaiming the great deeds and words

of the Son of Mary; by streams that trickle down to Jordan or Kishon, murmuring His teachings; by groves of oak and oleander and palms, where the winds whisper His parables and miracles—you come to where the hill of Safed (the Sepphoris of Pontius Pilate) rises above the basin of the Lake of Tiberias. Climbing this, you suddenly behold

> His lake, the Sea of Chinnereth,
> The waves He loved, the waves which kissed His feet
> So many blessed days.

What waters in all the world can inspire thoughts and reflections more absorbing or profound than that sheet of sleeping silver thus beheld between the desert hills of Gadara and the plains of Bethsaida and Gennesaret? Many and many a well-known inland sea, renowned for its beauty or its scenes of history, have I visited in all parts of the world, from Lakes Superior and Michigan to the meres of Bulgaria and Greece, and the inland waters of Scandinavia and Japan; nor can a candid traveller fail to call the Lake of Galilee well nigh the least imposing and attractive of them all as regards outward scenery and surroundings. The range which bounds it on the east is bare, arid, and sadly coloured. The highlands to the westward are rugged and stripped of soil and foliage by the storms of many centuries; while southward toward Tiberias the sheet of lifeless and ill-shaped water is seen narrowing off under unlovely shores, to let Jordan pass forth again, for the completion of its gloomy

course into the Dead Sea. Yet that diminutive, unprepossessing, and non-picturesque expanse of Syrian hill-drainage counts in the annals of mankind for more than all the lakes, and even oceans. Swifter and stronger than the flood of the impetuous Jordan, which breaks southwards through the dry nebbuk bushes from its extremity, and not destined, like that, to be lost in the oblivion of a "Sea of Lot," a stream of divine and mighty influence has poured over Christendom from this little Syrian mere, and by the words spoken on those shores has transformed the face of the world. As you sit on Safed amid chattering Jews and Arabs ignorant or heedless of the immortal recollections of the scene, it appears to you, and very truly appears, that no other locality in the world can crowd together such commanding, such overwhelming associations. If you know where to look for them, in the wide, hot, sterile champaign lying at your feet, grey with desolate, uncultivated rocks, yellow with desert sand, and only relieved here and there by green ribbons and partial patches of verdure where a watercourse divides or a swamp moistens the thirsty plain; provided you have a good map and a good memory, what a prospect! Near at hand below you is Tell Hum, "His City," Capernaum. Opposite the ruins of that memorable site, beyond the lake, steam in the sun the crags of Gadara, the region of the possessed swine; of the demoniacs; of the man in the tombs, who was "exceeding fierce." That small, verdant oasis of reeds, tamaracks, and

oleanders, with a few scattered palms, jutting into the lake, is Bethsaida, the "house of fish," and beyond it, where the ancient Roman road cuts deep into the limestone rock, at yon cluster of huts lurks El Mejdel, the village of Mary Magdalene. Think only for a moment what the world owes to that one parched, obscure, sand-buried Syrian hamlet, where Mary of Mejdel was born, who came to be Christ's nearest and most faithful of friends, and who heard from His lips—alone among women, alone of all the world—her own name spoken at the door of the empty sepulchre by One who uttered it from the farther side of the gateway of death, "Conqueror for us of the unconquerable."

Beyond Bethsaida and El Mejdel, upon the western border of the lake, opens the plain of Gennesaret, where a spring of water renders cultivation possible; and then, southward still, among peaks and points, amid which every rock has a record of surpassing interest, you pass under the "Horns of Hattin," by the "Valley of the Doves," over the foot of the "Mount of the Sermon." Yes, there above your path on this green headland, where the crocus, the anemone, and the amaryllis are alone left to tell of it and to celebrate it, He pronounced those wonderful words which are the eternal code of Christian ethics, the immortal pandects of man's highest morality. There, amid those thorn bushes, armed with the savage tricuspid spikes which were to make His crown, and among the juniper clumps creeping dark along the grass, and the deep green,

glossy nebbuk thickets, lit here and there with a rosy gleam of oleander blossoms, He gave the whole world that simple prayer to pray which makes us the family of one Father, and which binds us all to forgive trespasses as we ask to be forgiven. There, with His sacred lips, speaking the mild and holy wisdom of heaven, He abolished those old, hard laws of Mosaic hatred, revenge, and retaliation, and substituted for them that guiding rule of life—"golden" as the sunlight upon the lake, and just as plain to see and follow—which is the earthly side of "all the law and all the prophets," and which, with love and fear of God, fulfils the whole duty of existence. There, amid those lilies and cyclamens, He tenderly praised the matchless beauty of the flowers, and lightly smiled at the want of faith which fears lest the children of men be not so dear to the Universe as the "grass of the field." What fane in all the world can be visited, what famous site of ancient or modern annals, what sumptuous cathedral, spacious palace, stately capital, or splendid and powerful seat of lordship and wealth, where mind and heart must become so enthralled and meditative as here; where the very camels seem to go wistfully, swinging you up to the Mount of the Sermon, and you draw the nose-string of your long-necked beast and reverently dismount, that you may not presume to ride where Christ the Lord has walked and taught, and opened to all mankind the "light of the world?"

A little way farther, among those rough but wonderful pathways of Galilee, you shall come,

full of all these irresistible and potent recollections, to Cana, to the hamlet of the Miracle of the Marriage, where a stream of thin crystal still trickles, from which those drinking pots were doubtless charged,

> Whose modest water saw the Lord and blushed.

Cana-El-Jelil is a well-authenticated spot lying among the uplands of Nazareth, with a handful of mean huts clustered near the rivulet, and a strip of sloping ground painted gay with crocus and cyclamen in the Syrian spring. From its border I remember plucking one of the purple blossoms, which I afterward presented to a beautiful American lady on her wedding-day with the accompaniment of these verses—

> Only a flower! but then it grew
> On the green mountains which enring
> Cana-El-Jelil, looking to
> The village and the little spring.
> The love that did those bridals bless
> Soft upon yours this morning shine!
> Make happier all your happiness,
> And turn its water into wine!

From Cana to Nazareth is only a step, and, indeed, all the Holy Land is so small in its proportions, as has been said, so condensed in its localities, so minute and geographically insignificant in its areas and distances, that it seems a mere handful of soil, so to speak—the last corner in the world man would have chosen to become the most memorable and most important! Yet every furlong of ground

hereabouts is richer with great reminiscences than hundreds of leagues elsewhere. You journey forward after leaving Cana, from the "hill of the Beatitudes" and the "rock of the feeding of the five thousand" to a sort of amphitheatre in these Galilean uplands, and there, suddenly—all white and small and silent, with its Church of the Annunciation, its monastery of Latin monks and its Fountain of the Virgin, where evening after evening Mary the Mother and her divine Son drew well-water together—is Nazareth. Old Quaresimus calls it "a rose set sweet within the green leaves of its encircling hills;" but that is pious flattery. It is a poor, small, whitewashed collection of mean, flat-topped houses, with tiny domes, and one steep, dirty, ill-kept street; yet is it nevertheless a spiritual metropolis of the earth, as you must feel when you stand inside the Church of the Annunciation and read the golden letters on the rock in the cave, "Hic Verbum Caro Factus Est"—"Here the Word was made flesh." There can hardly be a passage of travel so long or surely remembered as when, evening after evening, you walk down from the hill where the old city stood, to the Well, and know that you are treading in the daily steps of the "Carpenter's Son." When I was at Nazareth I purchased the seven acres of wild rock and ruins on that hill—the exact and certain spot where our Lord "opened the Book and read"—hoping to found a small hospital there; and at first my humble enterprise prospered. But the Greek and Latin monks quarrelled about it;

NAZARETH. *P.* 82.

difficulties intervened, the sailing ship which carried the beds, fittings, and inscription-stone went down at sea. The project had to be abandoned. Latterly, however, it has been revived, with new hopes and efforts; and just before leaving England last year, I agreed to make over the Sultan's firman, which I still held, to those who are again endeavouring to establish the "Katharine Arnold Hospital."

Then, onward from Nazareth, with Mount Carmel still towering on the right and standing grandly up from the sea, this intensely absorbing and unequalled journey leads the traveller down the rugged slope from "His native city" into the plain of Esdraelon, over the brook Kishon, with such remarkable places as Nain, Shunem, Chesulloth, Megiddo occurring by the wayside, to King Ahab's country, to Jezreel and Gerizim and the regions of Samaria. There lives in my recollection a memorable ride I took hereabouts from the walls of Nablous, at the special request of Dean Stanley, my old tutor at Oxford, to visit and sketch the alleged tomb of Joshua. We got into temporary difficulties with the Moslems at that out-of-the-way spot for breaking off a twig of a tree growing by the tomb, which, they averred, was of miraculous character, moving itself once a year away from the structure in order to allow the walls to be newly whitewashed. A line of telegraph posts runs now-a-days between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, under the gates of Nablous, and actually skirts the broken and scattered masonry of Jacob's Well, where our Lord talked with the woman of

Samaria. All the way from Nazareth to Jerusalem you follow—and must follow—the path trodden by His feet whenever He went up to the Holy City, the first sight of which from the hill Scopus, when you have treaded the "Valley of the Robbers" and the desolate stone country of the Prophet Samuel, is more impressive, I think, than that of any other city on the earth.

All along the road the sorrow-stricken and deserted land is so poor and depopulated, but its name and fame so rich! There are not twenty miles of good road where you can canter your Arab horse from Damascus to the Mount of Olives; and if it rains too hard to pitch tents, you must put up every night in the squalid, bare huts of the miserable peasantry, where the only furniture will be a roll of bedding, a few brass and clay vessels, a Koran in a silk bag, and a bottle of antimony, with a pointed stick in it to blacken the under lids of the women's eyes. There is no exit for the smoke of the fire lighted on the floor, except the low door; and the cattle share the only apartment with the family and their guests. One side of a street in Chicago would buy the fee-simple of all Palestine! Yet at Nazareth, at Bethlehem, and on that first view of the City of the Cross and the Passion, lying under the fair slopes of Olivet, all fatigues, all hardships fade from the wanderer's mind, and the bare, hungry, neglected, ill-governed land seems proud and rich, powerful and queenly, simply by possessing those sites and furnishing those scenes.

In Jerusalem itself you sleep, as it were, on the very lap of religious history, and breathe an air charged with imperishable, sacred recollections. Too probably it will be charged with a good deal of fever besides, from such places as the Pool of Hezekiah, by which your hotel will in all likelihood stand, and from other unsanitary but deeply interesting spots. For most pilgrims the interest of Palestine centres and culminates within the walls of Jerusalem, and truly wonderful it is to mark the deep fervour of adoration provoked among those crowds of poor and pious votaries from all nations, which gather in and around the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. There the irony of history is shown by the two strange and significant facts that, spite of the Crusades, the soldiers of the Sultan of Turkey guard its gates, and that not a Jew is ever permitted to enter them. Of course the precise localities pointed out in this edifice and near at hand are almost always fictitious. Nobody knows for certain a single spot connected with the trial and crucifixion of Christ, and probably great surface changes have effaced the features of most of them. But enough in and around the city has been spared to fill and feed the imagination. The Mount of Olives, Bethany, the Garden of Gethsemane, Kedron, the site of the Temple, the Pools of Bethesda and of Siloam, the road to Jericho and that to Bethlehem and Hebron, such are surely enough to satisfy, to saturate rather, the reasonable sojourner. For me, during

those never-to-be-forgotten days of residence in Palestine, it was the city and the country itself, its daily life, the scenes in its valleys, towns, and villages, its air and trees and creatures and landscapes, which taught me most, and most occupied and enthralled me.

Meantime all this discursive and irrepressible retrospect springs from a question asked of me, whether I recollected any special incident of travel in the Holy Land. I do, indeed, remember a curious night passed there, full of solemn and far-reaching thoughts, mingled with the most incongruous scenes and pursuits. It was a night spent on the plain of Jericho in shooting wild boar amid the company of the Arabs of Er-Riha—that is to say, the "village of the strong odour"—which place is, by the way, very justly named. My sister and I had ridden over the arid hills from Jerusalem to the Ghôr, as the deep depression is called wherein lies the Dead Sea. We took an escort of Turkish soldiers, for the district was dangerous, and especially so about that particular locality on our way where "the man fell among thieves." From the brow of the western range, where they locate the "Mount of Temptation," you look into the deep, hot hollow of the "Sea of Lot" (Bahr-Lut), and all over the lower portion of the Jordan's course. The impetuous river, hastening to die, rushes through the thickets of thorn and reed beds into the great, still caldron of the brimming lake, and makes a long line of whitish water where it enters the

thick and foul basin. Then it perishes, like everything else around. There is no exit for the lost stream, which is sucked up by the hot sun as fast as it enters, leaving in the scorched and yellow hollow only that evil, sticky, poisonous, but beautifully blue and placid sheet of stagnant slime. The Dead Sea's borders nourish nothing of either animal or vegetable life, but are fringed with gaunt, dry, white trunks and branches of trees, carried down by the Jordan, seared and salted by the asphalt of the "Lake of Death."

If you bathe in it, as I did, you cannot sink, albeit you may very likely float feet upward and head beneath the sickly wave, unless you are a practised swimmer. The water—if such hell-broth may claim that wholesome appellation—tastes like petroleum, lamp-oil and colocynth blended together. When you emerge, it is to find your body crusted all over with a salt deposit, which it is well to wash off immediately by a good dip and swim in some quiet part of the Jordan. In the full stream, however, of that swift river no swimmer could live. I asked one of my soldiers for what amount he would ride across the swollen current, and he replied, "Effendi! not for all the dollars of the Pacha of Jerusalem!"

The surrounding scenery is not without a wild and desolate beauty. Beyond the Sea of Death the mountains of Moab present that fine, serrated ridge called by Lamartine "*Une ligne droite tracée par une main tremblante,*" and in the changing

influences of sunrise and sunset show alternately rose-pink, purple, blue and blood-red. The vast plain of the Ghôr stretches from range to range, apparently rich in vegetation and strangely pretty. Nevertheless most of the foliage is of the dry glossy nebbuk, the bush of barrenness, mingled with the Dead Sea apple, a kind of thorn on the hideous and acrid fruit of which the Arabs say the damned in hell daily feed. Still there are springs and trickling streams here and there, which render a sparse, fitful cultivation possible; and such occasional crops, together with the natural roots and berries, bring the wild pig to the spot, in quest of whom we were to sally forth as soon as the moon rose, about 9 P.M.

I shall not easily forget that odd, savage, sleepless night, between solemn hills that shut out Jerusalem on the west and the dark rampart of the Moabitish mountains on the east. I had become popular with the Arabs by reason of having rebuked my Bashi-Bazouks for tearing down the thorn fence of their village to make a fire. I had compelled my armed escort of rascals to pluck a camel-load of thorns and repair the damage, and the desert people, unused to justice, were anxious to show me good sport with "the accursed beast." We sallied forth in single file silently under the bright moonlight, and brought up in an open space with the Arabs in company and eight or ten mangy, prick-eared dogs, which did not appear very likely to tackle such boars as I had known in India. I carried a double gun loaded with buckshot and my cook's green

handled knife in my belt. My dragoman had his sabre only, and the Arabs their matchlocks and spears. We squatted a long time on the sand, every dog receiving instantly a tremendous blow with a cudgel if he fought his fellows or barked, for it was to be essentially a still hunt.

"What do we wait for?" I presently asked, and the answer given was, "We are waiting for El-Nimr." This I supposed would prove some doughty hunter, styled "the Tiger" for his personal qualities, but it turned out to be a famous dog infallible at scenting and fighting pigs, which dog presently came up in the society of a master as ugly as himself. A one-eared, scarred, battered, cock-eyed mongrel cur it was, but El-Nimr knew his business thoroughly, and being by-and-bye ordered to seek for game, disappeared in the thick bushes, we silently following.

The method of the strange chase turned out to be this:—Everybody, including the dogs, had to attend patiently and respectfully upon "the Tiger," who again and again emerged from the cover, mute and wistful, without any results; but after two miles of wandering we heard a low yelp from him at a distance, and immediately all the other dogs sprang silently into the thicket, going off, *ventre à terre*, toward the sound. Soon El-Nimr raised a short, sharp howl of certainty, and my dragoman exclaimed, "Now we shall get wild pork!" The rest of the scratch pack joined hereupon in a hoarse uproar, making the wandering jackals yell and fly, and we

all ran hard in the direction of the clamour, to find the centre of it a dense clump of prickly thorns and nebbuk, where apparently a pig had taken refuge. Animated by our approach, "the Tiger" went boldly into the darkness, and soon forth into the moonlight jumped the unhappy hog, which fell to an easy double shot at close quarters from my gun. However, as nearly every Arab also blazed off his matchlock, and madly danced in the way of his fellows, I saw there would be manslaughter as well as "wild pork" if we continued such a loose, illegitimate pastime, and therefore gave the word to go back to camp, especially as we had already obtained a pair of tusks and enough forbidden meat for all the Christians in our camp. Needless to say, the Arabs and Turks would not touch the unclean creature, which nevertheless affords no bad food when young.

On our way back to the encampment, El-Nimr had three or four other *alertes*, one of which was due to a roving jackal and the other to a wandering Bedouin, probably bent on no honest errand, whom we saved with difficulty from the dogs which had encircled him. But the chief attraction of that singular nocturnal chase was the scene itself. The deadly pallid sheet of the Sea of Lot stretching away to Petra and Egypt; the hills so full of history and religion, this side and that; the dark patches of bitter thorn glittering in the moonlight, with here and there a whispering palm-tree standing high among them, suggesting Zacchaeus and the days of

the journey to Jericho, with close at hand "Bethabara, beyond Jordan," and the very pool of the ancient river quite near us, where our Lord Himself underwent baptism. What a locality for a hunting party! We were too rugged and irregular a lot in aspect to apply to us that verse—

> Oh, why so bold,
> In steel and gold,
> On the paths that Christ has trod?

But it did seem ridiculous and well-nigh irreverent to be chasing wild hogs over such a sporting ground.

Riding back next day to Jerusalem, we stayed to lunch at the khan, built near the traditional spot where the parable of the Good Samaritan had its happening. There is a beautiful blue hyacinth with small, dark blossoms which grows in early spring along this dry, steep road, albeit it was too soon in the year for the real lily of the Sermon of the Mount, the scarlet martagon, which—

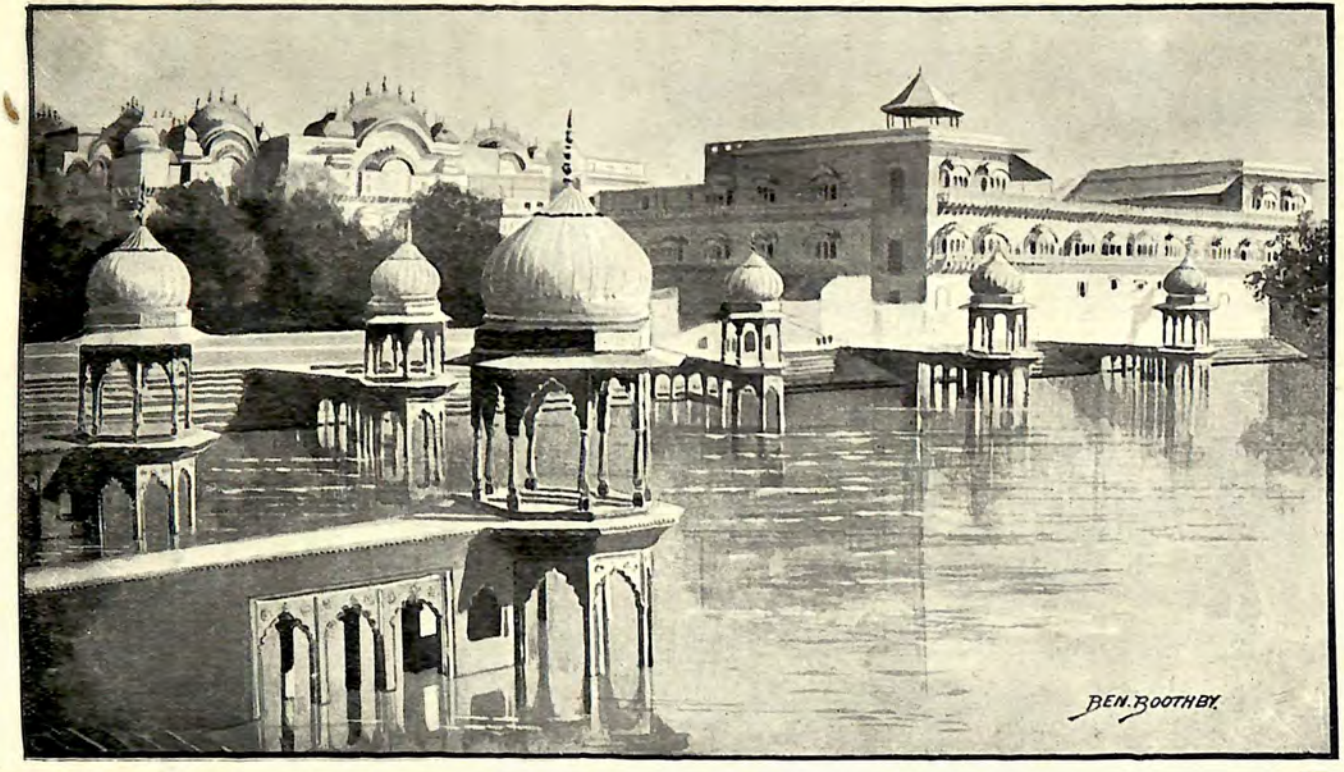
> Decks herself, still,
> Mindful of His high words, in red and gold,
> To meet the step of summer.

At the little spring near the khan an Arab of good address and breeding sat down with us, and, after salutations and a little talk, calmly offered to buy my sister for his wife at the price of all his long string of camels. The offer was meant kindly and respectfully, but the lady, on being acquainted with her conquest, abruptly declined it, whereupon the young Sheikh gravely removed the silk and gold

rope from his haick and laid that small offering at the feet of the English "Sittina" who had charmed him. No, indeed! What with the wild pork and Arabs, and my would-be Bedawee brother-in-law, I shall never forget the time I passed at Jericho.

V

INDIAN PRINCES AT HOME



THE TANK, ULWAR PALACE.

V

INDIAN PRINCES AT HOME

THIS world we live in is becoming sadly monotonous as it shrinks year by year to smaller and smaller apparent dimensions, under the rapid movement provided by transcontinental trains and swift ocean steamships. Along with the ceaseless rush of "civilisation" go also inevitably the ubiquitous evening dress suit, the latest fashion plate from Paris, the tall silk hat, and the other ugly things which are so convenient because they are so universal. Costumes and ethnological variety are meantime vanishing before the face of such invasions from the surface of the globe, and your fellow-passenger in the Pullman palace car, or in the saloon of the Cunarder, may be of any European or North or South American country on the map, for anything that can now-a-days be gathered from his attire.

The manners of all peoples are getting levelled down to one dull, dead plane by the same agency, and differences of language alone preserve a certain lingering distinction. The graceful mantilla is being silently abolished from Spain, and the pretty faldetta from Italy, while even in Japan the city folk have taken to red socks and wideawakes, and the ladies think themselves out of the mode on public occasions

if they do not substitute the artificial "confections" of Paris, London, and New York for the lovely and always becoming kimono and obi. Posterity more and more is threatened with residence upon a dismal orb, where everybody will wear one common style of garment, will talk, think, and live in the same way, so as to be at last as rigidly and dolefully like each other as peas in a sack, or ants toiling and moiling upon a log.

In Asia and Africa almost alone does the Old World preserve something of its bygone rich and refreshing variety of existence. The custom, indeed, of even dressing at all, except, perhaps, in brass wire and beads, has yet to invade the greater part of the "Dark Continent," where there accordingly prevails a perfectly delightful dissimilarity of taste and habit in the coiffure, in the loin aprons, and in fantastic methods of treating the ears, the nose, the lips, and the limbs.

India is also a land where the increasing dreary sameness of modern times and habits does not and can not penetrate, or else is lost sight of in the vastness and picturesqueness of those antique Hindoo societies. As in the untouched portions of Japan, you find all over the Indian peninsula that the decrees of the great goddess of fashion are unknown or powerless. The people wear the beautiful and seemly garments which their ancestors wore two thousand years ago, unaltered in seam, or selvage, or shape, but allowing an endless range of individual choice for tints, materials, richness of adorn-

ment, and charm of general effect. There men and women, unlike ourselves, seem to clothe their bodies as the flowers do, for innate joy of hue and grace of good-fellowship and animation. A mob of Europeans or of Americans differs from a crowd of Asiatics as a stubble of wheat, or a prairie grey and grim with sage brush, differs from a bed of tulips or a brightly-waving field of poppies and buttercups. Looking, indeed, at the sombre garb and despondent aspect of our crowded modern cities, one often sighs, even in Anglo-Saxon communities, for a return to the "peach-coloured satin coat with lace ruffles," of which in good Queen Anne's time Oliver Goldsmith was so prettily vain. To see popular gatherings alive and brilliant with happy colours, and to find the lost repose and delightfulness of daily life extant, and visible, and placidly prized, one must wander to-day among Indian cities and enter the precincts of the temples of their gods and the courts of the Hindoo princes. Let us, then, "come into the sun" for a space, and realise a little the peaceful, glowing, varied, and picturesque daily life in and around the royal homes of India.

How an Indian city itself, and its everyday sights and sounds under the continual and exhilarating sunlight, would astonish some of this overdriven American public! No tram-rails cut up the streets, no importunate clang of the electric bell, no rush and pelt and rattle of hack and cab and express waggon or overloaded omnibus upon rugged paving-stones jar the nerves. The very busiest street in Delhi,

Jeypore, Agra, or Poona is a perfect garden of repose for its calm and quiet compared to the uproar and diurnal fever of a byway in any third-rate American town. The unpaved sand or loam of the broad or narrow passage between the shops and houses gives back no echo to the footfall of the men, cattle, and vehicles that traverse it. They might be moving flower-beds for their colour and their silence of soft motion. The men are all diversified with clean, becoming robes of white or grey, and with brilliant turbans surmounting their neat, cool attire—turbans of purple, lilac, sky-blue, rose-red, green and amber—and the women draw over their smooth black brows and shapely shoulders *saris* of the loveliest contrasted and blended tints imaginable, bordered with rich patterns and threaded with gold and silver embroidery, or inlaid with little flashing plates of glass and pearl shell. The bare feet of the women and children and the sandals of the men and boys create no noise and the sleepy, patient animals in the ox-carts go up or down the highway with broad, noiseless hoofs and light loads of sugar-cane, fodder, or cotton, disturbing the long and warm midday lull with nothing louder than the chafing of the wooden yoke beam or the creak of an ungreased wheel. The babies astride upon the hips of their mothers never cry, and never have anything to cry about. The boys, being, as they are, not Christians, but Hindoos, never want to be noisy, devilish, or cruel, but always go about their games or errands gravely and silently. Here and there a group of friends newly met con-

verse in elevated tones of pleasure, and there is, perhaps, a wrangle somewhere about a doubtful bargain or a little harmless quarrel over a bad eight-anna piece, which ends, as it began, in words. But the traders in the open shops never vociferate, and never madly advertise their goods, nor put up rival statements of supernatural cheapness, nor struggle fiercely and perpetually one with the other for the almighty dollar or its Asiatic equivalent. Placid and dignified and self-contained, with the established habits of thirty centuries, they squat alongside their goods, not pushing their sale, seeing that what is wanted will surely be asked for when "Allah wills" or "Purshuram pleases;" and meantime, while calmly awaiting customers, they smoke the drowsily-bubbling hookah or leisurely balance their accounts with a reed pen, or upon the abacus.

There may be hundreds, nay thousands, perambulating a long street like that of the lively and famous Chandnichowk in Delhi or the Moti Bagh in Poona, and yet withal not more uproar or hubbub than in a retired nook of the Central Park at New York. Nobody is in a hurry, and for everybody alike it is quite enough prosperity merely to live under such a glad, bright, existence-gilding sun, and amid so many sweet and pleasing sights of surrounding nature. For nature is everywhere present around and among these Asiatic communities, not terrified out of contact by business and the noise and smoke of big cities, as with us and you. In every corner the palm-tree lifts its stately feathered head and sings a hymn

from its waving plumes to the cooling breeze; the banana hangs her broad green flags over the white house walls and window lattices. The Indian convolvuli, great bells of blue and white, with the splendid yellow lupins and the tender lilac and gold sprays of the Bougainvilliers, adorn the very meanest huts; and upon the roofs and ridge-poles thus beautified the animals take part in the general city life. There will be as likely as not monkeys sitting upon many a housetop. The four-handed folk come in from the jungles to squat upon the highest tiles, all talking jungle gossip, to the disparagement, no doubt, of their bimanous and over-busy kindred.

The little striped squirrels run up and down the doorposts of the grain sellers' shop; the sacred cow from the nearest temple wanders by each store of open corn and pulse, putting her privileged muzzle into the rice bags; the green parrots flash up and down the mid-street with a lively clamour, and the great black bats—the flying foxes—hang in hundreds by their hooked wings from the bare fig-tree. You can hear, amid the full tide of the city's traffic, the "swash" of the clothes being washed and beaten at the tank, and the scream of the kites as they circle round and round in the pale, clear sky overhead. The loudest sounds in the long, thronged, lively but peaceful street will be the *ekka* rumbling along on two ponderous wheels with some merchant's family, its oxen and its red curtains all covered with bells which jingle not unmusically, or some half-naked religious mendicant blowing his big copper trumpet

or beating his cymbals for alms. Peace—the sustained, philosophic, contemplative peace of Asia—broods over the people and the place. Life has of itself become a luxury in ceasing to be a task, a mill-grind, a never-ending work and worry. Ah! if I could only transport some of the nerve-weary workers, men and women, whose intelligent faces and kindly eyes I see amid these many splendid cities of the United States, worn with the fever and the rush of daily affairs, to the quiet of my Indian cities and fields, how quickly I could give them back again *la joie de vivre*, that lost calm and gladness of the healthy human soul, which cures everything, and is an earthly side of the "peace that passeth understanding."

Prominent among the buildings of the city are the temples and the palaces. These simple Asiatics neither possess nor desire—nor, indeed, need—the countless large institutions which fill your cities with imposing piles of architecture. They want no town-hall, because the tank, the temple court, and the market-place serve very well for all the purposes of such an edifice under weather which never betrays. They want no vast hotels, because everybody lodges with his kinsfolk; and they want no big hospitals, because the Government looks to that; they need no insurance offices, banks, asylums, or manufactories, because they insure good luck by giving the gods a cake or two or some flowers; they bank by melting their spare silver into ornaments for wife and children; they take care of and tenderly

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protect their own imbeciles and indigent, and they make everything needful with their own fingers. But the temple will probably be gay, stately, and beautiful, and the palaces of the Maharajah will be objects of pride and joy to the populace, and often very sumptuous, indeed, outside as well as inside.

We will leave the temples and mosques alone to-day, and penetrate a little within those palace walls (which everybody, be it understood, may not very easily do, seeing that the interior life and domestic surroundings of a Hindoo prince of high rank are not usually open even to such energetic curiosity as that of American interviewers).

Let the visit which we are to pay be in a city of Rajpootana, say, a very interesting and typical region of India, and let us choose the court of one of the Rajpoot princes, the Maharajah of Ulwar, as a specimen for respectful inspection. His Highness Mangal Singh, the "Lion Lord of Good Fortune," as the name signifies (albeit the title has since been sadly reversed), was one of the immensely far-descended kings of the great Rajpoot country, who rule their own chivalrous, gallant, and high-spirited people under the suzerainty of Her Mightiness the Empress Victoria, to whom he and all his royal kindred are most loyally attached. The Maharajah Mangal Singh is (this was in 1887) a Knight Commander of the Star of India, a magnate always saluted with a prescribed salvo of eleven guns whenever he visits the Governor of the Presidency. He is a young man of

perhaps twenty-five years, of an olive complexion, with eyes dark and lustrous, features intensely refined and delicate in tint, and indeed presenting the ideal of a Hindoo prince to look upon—such as

COURTYARD OF THE PALACE, ULWAR.

Eugene Sue tried to depict in his Djalma of the "Mysteries of Paris." His ruling passions are horses, the chase and war; but the last of these is of course a luxury impossible to indulge in, unless indeed the Maharani might some day be pleased at

need to ask her faithful Rajpoots for aid, and then Mangal Singh would love better than his life to take the field against Russian, Frenchman, or anybody else, at the head of a band of fearless, magnificent horsemen.

Notice, as we enter the walls of his inner town, how the heavy gate doors, hundreds of years old, are studded with six-inch long spikes of iron. That is a relic of pre-scientific and old-world belligerency, such as was prevalent in Asia when elephants were always first sent forward to batter down the portals of fortresses with their foreheads; and the only way of preventing the great beasts from bursting in a four-inch oak slab was to put a set of sharp spikes upon it. Even elephants, it was found, soon had enough of ramming a front door equipped in this style. The Rajpoot soldiers at the entrance of the palace precincts—dark warriors of an unmistakable fighting breed—wear the leaf of Rama's tree for their badge, which the god plucked from the Indian jungle when he was starting forth to recover Sita from Ravana, the Demon King of Ceylon. Along the road leading to the palace front you may see several hunting leopards lying on their bedsteads lightly chained.

It is a favourite sport of the Prince and of his fellow-rulers to pursue the black antelope with a trained cheetah, and I have myself often witnessed that strange and exciting kind of hunting. The leopard is carried, in a condition of sharp hunger, to the open deer-country upon a peasant's bullock-cart, and when the antelopes are sighted the cart is care-

fully driven in a circle nearer and nearer to some fine buck with good long horns, until the animal is brought within reasonable distance. Then the hood is taken from the beast, whose savage eyes roam round and round the plain, and soon fasten upon the deer, by this time some four or five hundred yards away, and not in the least suspecting what looks like a simple country cart with its rural people bent upon agricultural pursuits. The leopard, set free, slides down like a ferret from his straw bed on the cart, and worms his way unseen through rocks and bushes, until he has drawn near enough in rear or flank of his victim for a final rush, which he makes like a lightning flash, generally surprising and seizing the paralysed buck before it can gather itself together for escape. If the deer manages to get away, the cheetah puts forth no further attempt to follow it, but sulks in the thicket and is very difficult to catch again.

But if it succeeds in striking down its prey, the hunters hurry up, and while dragging the growling, savage jaws away from the bleeding haunch or neck of the deer, they slip into the crimsoned mouth of the brute a fresh-cut joint of a goat or calf, and the leopard, thus deceived and pacified, is soon secured anew and placed upon the vehicle.

In the Rajah's grounds you will see these royal cheetahs and the men who have charge of them peacefully sleeping together on the same "charpoy," but, all the same, the beautiful hunting beasts are in their evil moods fearfully ill-tempered and dangerous. Farther on we shall come upon a rhinoceros

roped up to a stout post and munching cabbage. He is the survivor of the old, bad practice of beast fights, in which all the Rajpoot princes, like other Indian potentates, indeed, and magnates, used to indulge; but the Ulwar Maharajah was too well educated and enlightened for any strong taste toward this. He has abolished the custom indeed. Here is, nevertheless, the bygone "Bestiarium"—the *janwa-khana*, the place wherein many and many a combat of jungle gladiators has been beforetimes bloodily waged—rhinoceros and tiger, rhinoceros and elephant, elephant with elephant, &c., as well as combats between rams, stallions, and buffaloes. There are princes and rich Zemindars who even now delight in such barbarous pastimes, and I know of one who, on a certain festive occasion, fastened a note for a thousand rupees to the tusk of a male elephant mad with "must," and another on the horn of a wild bull buffalo, and offered them as prizes to the daring horsemen who, after two or three perhaps of their rivals had been gored to death, could secure the tempting wealth.

The palace at Ulwar offers a good example of Hindoo architecture of the florid and latter modern-day kind. There is a rich, ornamental frontal wall with little cupolas over the gates, as well as upon each corner, the exquisite shape of which is directly borrowed from the curves assumed by the bamboo when it is bent to form a roof. Inside the wall, pierced by a vaulted and coloured entrance arch, spreads a court, flanked on the right and left hand by

halls open on one side, with rows of beautiful sculptured columns, and leading on the far side by broad and sweeping flights of marble steps to an inner and highly decorated gateway. Through this we shall make bold to pass into the palace proper —that is to say, the public chambers of it and the audience rooms (*diwan'khanas*), for the zenana, or women's quarter, is of course only for very privileged and feminine eyes — and albeit a hundred pair of them, lustrous and gem-like, may be secretly watching the strangers who tread these sequestered Indian apartments, the lattice from which they survey us will betray nothing of the inspection.

It is a pity that the Hindoos should have adopted from their Mohammedan conquerors the custom of secluding their women, but this is now a firmly-rooted habit, which the great ladies themselves do most to keep up. A *purdahnashin*, a "curtain-dweller," that is to say, or Hindoo woman of the higher classes, would not be seen out of doors, to save her life, except at religious ceremonies and in the marriage month. I have myself talked on important business with a Mahratta princess of whose august person I only discerned the points of the toes under the edge of an embroidered curtain; and when I was staying with the resident physician at Jeypore, in Rajpootana, a curious thing occurred. He was the old and trusted friend of the Maharajah, and the chief queen being taken ill, he was sent for from his dinner-table; but when he returned, he stated to us that he had been obliged to put his head into a

green baize bag before entering the zenana of his friend the King, and to feel the pulse of his illustrious patient and apply the stethoscope to her in the absurd embarrassment of such an envelope, without which he could not have passed into the women's quarter of the palace, firm friend and adviser as he was of all its inmates.

We may have the good fortune to see the little Prince of the reigning house, the heir-apparent of the ancient realm of Ulwar, walking with his hammals and attendants, who will sweetly say, though it is only early morning, "Good evening, sir," in order to demonstrate at once his politeness and his mastery of the English language. And we may even have the honour to salute the Maharajah himself, if we find him seated in his simple little chamber of justice, which gives by a carved window upon an outer garden full of orange and pomegranate trees, to the sill whereof suppliants and suitors may come from town and country to ask judgment and succour from His Highness. Do you perhaps think that only the West knows what true justice is? Observe over the arch above the writing-table of the young Maharajah that Persian verse which is inscribed from the Bostan or "Garden" of Sadi, and which says:—

> Oh, King, take heed unto the poor man's sigh;
> Unheeded, it can climb and shake the sky.

If it be not too busy a day among his somewhat litigious subjects with the youthful and energetic

ruler of the Ulwar State, he may very possibly himself show the favoured visitors some of the wonders of his royal abode. There is, for instance, the Shish'mahal—that is to say, the "Hall of Mirrors"—entirely lined with dazzling plaques and fragments of coloured crystal, which reflect the bright entering beams of the Indian sun with such burning and variegated lustre that it seems an apartment carved out of some mountain-side where the native rock is full of jewels.

The Hindoos love light. Those triumphs of Western manufacture and gifts of Western science which they most admire are not our noisy locomotive engines and complex mill machinery, which are too restless and hasteful for them, but chandeliers with a great many branches, and coloured lamps with the electric light shining among cut glass. Every Indian palace is apt, indeed, to be almost too much enriched and illuminated by such foreign importations, for the usually sombre and cloistered construction of these abodes of Eastern quiet and luxury is better suited to the soft gleam of oil-wicks burning in those brass lamps which the native artificer fashions so skilfully in the shape of god or goddess, of coiled serpent or couching tiger, of the sacred bird called "Hansa," or of the lotus and moonflower. But even in Rajpootana they will all have immense glass chandeliers and dropping crystal lustres, of which, therefore, these Ulwar halls are all found full. In one of them was to be beheld a remarkable instance of lavish and costly expenditure. It

was a long dining-room table, capacious enough to seat fifty guests, made entirely—top, frame, and legs—from solid silver. There must be a ton or more of the precious metal in this piece of apparent ostentation, which is, of course, as an article of furniture, foreign to Hindoo habits, since everybody in India sits on the floor to eat, as also in Japan, or, if any tables be used, they are of the small Turkish and Arab kind, about the size of a low music-stool. That is why, when we want dinner removed in Hindostan, we say "Mez lejao," that is, "Take away the table." Upon and down the highly expensive "mahogany" of His Highness run two broad slots or channels, in which, by some ingenious clock-work contrivance, a crystal current is driven perpetually along, carrying with it little fishes of all colours, fashioned in jewels and enamelled. And very pretty indeed it is to see these artificial shoals glide along in the miniature rippled river, between its mimic banks of glittering silver. It must be, moreover, understood, before American severity of taste too much condemns such a use of solid treasure as that of my royal friend, that it is the habit all over India to put what you here call "hard money" into similar tangible and visible shape. I have seen in Baroda, at the armoury of His Highness the Guicowar, cannon cast in solid silver, seven and ten pounders, with wheels and carriages all to match; and whenever a Hindoo artisan or peasant possesses any rupees to spare, he takes them down to the *sonar* —the goldsmith—who melts them into a bracelet or

a bangle for the wrist or ankle of the man's wife or daughter.

If I could only paint for you the inner court of such a palace, with its walls and alcoves, its galleries and minarets, its terraces and pinnacles all gilded by the burning sun above and reflected below in the still waters of the tank that fills up the middle of the square, all my disengaged readers would want to go to that picturesque and brilliant country. Sometimes, remembering the mere "joy of life" that such scenes give, I wonder why we all bear to reside so many weary and cheerless years in the chilly latitudes of the Northern United States of America or of Great Britain. At the moment when I am writing, in this otherwise cheerful town of Dubuque, Iowa, a heavy snowstorm is whitening all the world around. The bitter wind screams, the stinging blizzard drives, the house doors are blocked with great wreaths of snow; and the pleasant city and goodly hills around about it, which I doubt not are very fair and bright in summer-time, look as if only Polar bears could be content to dwell in such a locality. But, of course, the colder regions of the world are its real workshops, and the nurseries of its dominant races; while it is only the dreamy religions and the deep philosophies—not petroleum and lumber and notions—which come from the sunny East. Still, I think, as science develops, and as the restless breed of man realises how great a delight lives in repose and in those zones of our globe where nature, being largest

and loveliest, lends her aid to that repose, the tropics and the subtropics will more and more be filled with emigrant people from the North and West. It may be reserved for your own mighty community, when you have filled up the Mississippi Valley with a hundred millions of prosperous folk, and made all your Western wildernesses laugh with the harvest which wells and irrigation works can produce, to take in hand and civilise, as we have done in India and Africa, some of the beautiful countries of the Amazon and Orinoco, and those too sadly wasted wonderlands of the South American States which are to-day swarmed over by naked Indians and jaguars, or by quarrelsome little hybrid Spanish races, not much more profitable or peaceful.

I said the Maharajah Mangal Singh loved horses, and he can show us, not far from this stately white marble palace under the hills, his superb stud of 2000 Arabs and Arab half-breeds, some of them such lovely and shapely creatures as are scarcely to be seen elsewhere. An Arab horse is an absolute luxury to ride, its temper is so sweet, its endurance so great and its pace so pleasant, thanks to the low, springy pasterns, which give elasticity to its dancing gait.

But let us now come away from Rajpootana and go on the wings of fancy to a very different district —that of Bhaonagar, in the region of Kattiawar, another independent State, where Takhtaji Singh is the great and enlightened chief. It shall be evening, and when the fireworks have all been finished, to the boundless pleasure of the vast crowds

outside the gates of the palace, we will enter and sit in the royal circle of the Diwan-Khana watching a Nautch or native dance.

It is a scene, this, very typical of India, where no festival or great ceremony is complete without the quiet and composing pleasure of the dance. Not that furious, gymnastic exercise in which we Westerns, especially our feminine section, rejoice to indulge, but the high and grave and distinctly fine art of rhythmical movement, accommodated to the lightest and faintest notes of the strange, wild music of cymbal and sitar, and to a harmony and subtlety of line and pace and waving limbs and robes to which the best ballet in Paris, London, or New York offers but a coarse contrast. The Prince, wearing rich and costly jewels, with a light evening coat of green satin, sits cross-legged at the top of the hall, having his guests and great officers beside him or ranged along the walls. His gorgeously dressed attendants, standing behind the royal cushion, are fanning the warm evening air from each face, or noiselessly bringing refreshments and the fragrant pipe.

Then Zanoub, the Persian girl, or Radha, the Hindoo nautchni, takes her *pan-soopari* (the betel-nut) from her mouth, adjusts her ample draperies, fastens the scarlet pomegranate-flower tighter in her hair, and rises to her feet, while the drum and tamboora begin "Taza-ba-taza" or "Jan-i-man." Lowly does she salaam to the great personage; piously does she touch the silver bells fastened upon her bare feet with a prayer for favour and

success, for dancing is a serious and solemn matter with these people. And then she softly becomes a living embodiment of music and of the poesy of motion; dancing true scientific dances; expressing the very language—by gesture, gait, and eloquent sway and wave of hand and foot and arm and body—of that passionate or sorrowful Persian or Guzerathi song, which she sings in a high falsetto, full of minor keys and minutely divided notes. Perhaps you will not admire it until you understand it and have studied its marvellous antique grace and emotional significance. Perhaps the Western man will prefer, after all he sees and hears, to encircle a tight-laced waist, bound in fashionable silk or satin, and whirl it round to the better comprehended strains of Strauss or Godfrey. But the indolent passions of the Indian blood find their delight in this measured, sober, refined and soothing *pas seul;* and all night long, as dancer after dancer salaams and sits down, to be succeeded by another and another and another, these statesmen, warriors, merchants, and pundits of the strange Indian world will watch with undiminished interest the slow, quiet, musical passages of the Nautch.

I remember, in the days of the great mutiny, when a famous native regiment, the Twenty-fifth Native Infantry of Bombay, marched back to our station covered with glory for faithfully fighting their rebel brethren, I was commissioned to ask the senior jemadar what form of entertainment the men would best like to accept from the ladies and gentlemen of

the station. The answer was a "Nautch;" and when we had hired the most famous dancing-girls of the district, and had pitched great *shamiana* tents on the plain, and had laid in plenty of betel-nut to chew, they wanted no more. All night long those veteran soldiers, fresh from fierce and bloody battles, sat in large rings of scores and hundreds under the moonlight, wearing their fatigue dress of white cotton, and watching the dancers, while softly smoking their "pipes of peace." How different are the races of men!

What would gratify most, no doubt, such gracious ladies as may honour me by reading these sketchy recollections, amid all the picturesque surroundings of Eastern royal life, would be, I think, those various Tosha'khanas or treasure chambers of the Indian courts. If I had time and space, I would also like to describe to American sportsmen the way in which the Indian princes hunt; and what splendid, varied, and exciting pastime in this line is afforded by the jungles of Hindostan, with the grand studs of trained elephants which such princes possess; as well as the really magnificent sport of pig-sticking, riding the grey wild boar down with the keen spear upon a quick and intelligent Arab horse. But I must be content here merely to mention the jewels of one particular Eastern potentate which dwell in my memory.

Some of the finest gems in the world are still to be seen in those Tosha'khanas of the peninsula, where they are greatly prized and carefully guarded.

Many of the best pearls from Ormuz or Ceylon, of the choicest pigeon-blood rubies from Burmah, emeralds of extraordinary size, carved with long inscriptions in Persian, Arabic, and Sanscrit, with delicate and costly enamels after the style of the master art of Jeypore, were stored in the royal collection which I inspected at Baroda in Guzerat. There were swords there whose hilts alone were worth a large estate, so richly were they crusted with costly stones, while the blades of some among them were of such fine and perfectly tempered steel as to be occasionally more valuable than the handles. Certain among the choicest blades had slots cut in the damasked steel, up and down which ran costly pearls or rubies cut to a round bead, and certain of them were thrust into spiral scabbards, so faultless were their spring and elasticity. The old Mahratta custodian would suddenly open some old marmalade jar or sardine-box taken from the great barred vault, and turn out of this unlikely receptacle, rolled up in an ancient red or green rag, such a belt of sapphires and diamonds, such a diadem of Oriental rubies, such a bracelet or anklet, or ring for the nose or finger, as must have made the eyes of any lady who had a proper and becoming passion for beautiful things sparkle like the jewels themselves.

On high public occasions the princes and magnates of India vie with each other in a dazzling and gorgeous display of gems, with which they repair on their elephants to durbars or receptions.

The native classical name for such lovely baubles is *santosha*, the Sanscrit word for "contentment," as if their wonderful beauty were calculated to fill ordinary hearts and minds quite to the brim. It is better, however, for such as are not millionaires to talk and think as little as possible about the gorgeous contents of those Indian treasure chambers. But if you are millionaires, Tiffany in Union Square, New York, or the shops of Bond Street, London, can show you jewels better set and cut than those of India, though not so large, ancient, and historical.

VI

LOVE AND MARRIAGE IN JAPAN

A JAPANESE DINNER.

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VI

LOVE AND MARRIAGE IN JAPAN

I HAVE been taken to task in a good-tempered way by many critics in England and America for venturing, in my "Seas and Lands" and "Japonica," to call the Japanese women "semi-angelic." The expression is a strong one, and it is never safe to generalise or exaggerate, least of all about such a subject. But, upon sitting down to write this article about the women of Japan, I find that I have nothing to retract. Upon maturest reflection, bringing together into one focus all the specimens I know of Japanese womanhood, in all ranks and circumstances of life, in all degrees of education, in town and country alike, I am still inclined to believe that the average or abstract Japanese female comes, all things considered, nearest among her sex, as regards natural gifts, to what we understand by an angelical disposition. This, be it stated, is not advanced in any idea of comparison or contrast with her sisters in other parts of the world. I would as soon, in my capacity as a writer, speak disrespectfully of the Gulf Stream or the Equator, and expect to be forgiven, as imply any disparaging parallel between various national repre-

sentatives of the fair sex. All I find myself obliged to maintain is that, taking into account her surroundings, this daughter of the Land of the Rising Sun might pass, I really believe, into a celestial state of existence with very few changes of nature, manners, or heart; and find herself, and be found there, quite at home.

Everybody who has become really acquainted with good Japanese women agrees more or less with what I here so daringly repeat; and among feminine opinions there is no better witness to the pleasant impression made upon kindly and intelligent minds by them than the admirable little book lately published by Miss Alice Mabel Bacon, every statement of which I believe to be as accurate as its style is graceful and its purpose high. The only people who do not appear to appreciate the Japanese women are the Japanese men, and, no doubt, this ought at once to make us pause before we praise them too highly, since their own husbands, fathers, and brothers must know a great deal more of social and domestic life in the country than the best-informed foreigner can ever learn. But I am inclined to believe it is really a case where the gods have been far more beneficent to a people than that people well understands. Still, since we encounter in Japan a general absence of reverence to the sex, and a lack of almost all those finer and higher feelings which have found expression with ourselves in chivalry and the literature of civilised love, it is natural to ask why outsiders alone should

become enthusiastic about the virtues and merits of Japanese women. From the point of view of physical beauty it is not to be pretended for a moment that the Japanese woman excels her Christian rivals. Seldom or never, indeed, does one see among them any example of perfect feminine beauty. Compared to their stately sisters of England and America they are what a delicate ivory carving is to a marble statue. They are nearly all very small, with short lower limbs, with a little nose pressed into the face, with sleepy, slant-lidded eyes, an almost ridiculous gait, and for the most part a very limited education and very narrow ideas. How, then, shall we analyse and define the secret of the charm which this unique specimen of her sex exercises over all appreciative and cultured minds when they approach and enter her sphere for the first time? It lies, no doubt, in her moral rather than her intellectual or physical nature. She is, in point of fact, the most unselfish, the most self-denying, the most dutiful and the most patient woman in the world, as well as the most considerate and pleasing; and, as I truly believe, more faithful to her own limited and ancient but earnest ideal of rectitude than any other of her sisters among the nations. The civilisation, immensely antique and rigid, which has not, with all its changes, produced so very great a success in the Japanese man, has, while placing the Japanese woman in a deplorably unfair and subordinate position, brought out from her being, by some strange

spell, all the social virtues of which her race is capable, and made her, even in her subjection, so gentle, winning, and admirable, that the boldest advocates of Japanese reform in education and national development tremble when they ask themselves whether civilisation and "woman's rights" may not take away more from this tranquil, contented, and delightful creature than it can ever give to her.

There can be no doubt that socially and civilly the position of the Japanese woman is low to the point of servitude. An American woman, who sits at the top of the human tree in regard to the rights and privileges of her sex, would indeed shudder with sympathy or redden with indignation if the full truth could be told about the situation of her Japanese sisters. Practically they have no personal rights from birth to death. They belong throughout, in theory and to a great degree in fact, to some man or other: first their father, next their eldest brother, afterwards their husband and his male relations. They hardly ever hold property, since the family is perpetuated along the male line only, and real and personal estates pass to the boys. They have little or no voice in choosing their husbands, yet take one they must before they are twenty years old; but that husband, whom they have not wanted, has an almost unquestioned right to divorce his wife upon the smallest reason, or for none at all. There exists really no true check upon this except what resides in the force of the opinion of neighbours. Out of

500 marriages, 200 at least end in some sharp and capricious separation; for the husband can get rid of his wife on the ground of too much gossiping or because of disagreement with the mother-in-law; and the worst of it is that the children afterwards belong to him exclusively. That is one reason why these Japanese wives are so divinely patient. Too patient indeed, we should all here say; but there hangs over their heads that perpetual sword of Damocles, the fear of dismissal; and to maintain their position they must please their lords and masters. In point of fact, there is no marriage at all in Japan. There are ceremonies, presents, family dinner-parties, puttings on and off of pretty dresses; but the so-called nuptial alliance is a matter of domestic arrangement, and has simply no legal or civil force at all. When the *nakodo* or agent has arranged a match, and all has been settled between the two houses, the bride and bridegroom drink nine little cups of sakë together, and the bride's name is transferred at the registry office of the Ken from her father's abode to that of her husband's father, where she will henceforth become her lord's constant body-servant and the humble attendant of his mother, who might make life a hell for her, and only seldom does so simply because Japanese natures are so much better than Japanese systems; wherefore for the most part the little brown people get on very well together. But the father parts with his daughter for good and all at marriage, except so far as visits of affection and compliment go; and for this reason, as in most Oriental countries,

daughters cannot be so much valued in Japan as sons. The daughter, dear as she may prove by her amiability, will some day or other disappear entirely from the domestic roof; while the son or sons are a permanent investment, carefully brought up and treasured by the Japanese father and mother, because, as old age approaches, it is the regular thing for the parents to give up the business and cares of life, and to lead an easy time, maintained entirely by their male children. This is everywhere an accepted rule. The merchant, farmer, or householder so retiring is called "Go Inkyo," and is treated with most unbroken respect and indulgence; for it is one of the central virtues of Japan unboundedly to reverence old age. We might almost indeed forgive the vast mischief that Confucius has wrought for China, and indirectly for Japan, by his abominable philosophy of Opportunism, when one sees everywhere in the two countries this noble and tender deference paid to grey hairs. Truly writes Miss Bacon: "To the time-honoured European belief that a young man must be independent and enterprising in early life in order to lay by for old age, the Japanese will answer that children in Japan are taught to love their parents rather than ease and luxury, and that care for the future is not the necessity that it is in Europe and America, where money is above everything else—even filial love. This habit of thought may account for the utter want of provision for the future and the disregard for things pertaining to the accumulation of wealth which often strikes curiously

the foreigner in Japan. A Japanese considers his provision for the future made when he has brought up and educated for usefulness a large family of children. He invests his capital in their support and education, secure of bountiful returns in their gratitude and care for his old age. It is hard for the men of old Japan to understand the rush and struggle for riches in America—a struggle that too often leaves not a pause for rest or quiet pleasure until sickness or death overtakes the indefatigable worker." The Japanese woman herself gets an immense benefit from it, for when she comes to be Obăsan, that is, "auntie," or Obâsan, which is "grandmamma," the hard part of her life is over, and she rests among her children, honoured and cared for, without complaint. On the whole, I am afraid that the two happiest periods in these gentle and self-denying lives are childhood and declining years.

The early years of the Japanese girl are, in truth, pleasant enough. Although not so welcome on her first appearance as her brothers are, she is sure to be dear both to father and mother: and in the latter of these she is equally sure to find a nurse and guardian truly "semi-angelic." She will be born into an atmosphere of gentleness, grace, and kindness, and after five or six weeks of infantile existence will pass into the outer world upon the back of some sister or little female servant, where she will learn insensibly to grow up like other Japanese babies, demure, restrained, silent, polite and self-respectful. When able to toddle about in her *geta* or *waragi*, she

will never be slapped or put into a corner or told "not to do so and so." The sternest possible moral medicine of reproof will be administered to her with the sugar of gentle voices and tender faces, but at the same time she will be instructed daily and hourly in the duty of suppressing herself, and absolutely obeying her elders and betters, as well as of being ready on all occasions to sacrifice herself for the sake of others. Of course the English or American idea would be that abjectness must result from all this; but positively that is not at all the case. The Japanese woman, like the Japanese man, brings out of all such early education in a marked degree the virtues of self-respect, high spirit, and resolution; the fact being that she sees in all this the ideal of her duty, and that which ensues—the submission of her whole life to her father first, to her husband next, and then to her grown-up male children—is the willing and eager compliance with a duty, not the acceptance of a bond. Japanese history is full of the most heroic proofs of the nobleness of soul possessed by the women of the land, from the great queen who conquered Corea to the lovely Oto Tachibani Himë, who died by leaping into the sea to appease the tempest and save her husband the Emperor. In private life, also, the Japanese woman displays no qualities of the slave; she is steadfast and heroic in sickness, danger, or poverty. Always a lady, in whatever rank of life she may be born, she permits herself no expression of impatience or revolt, which would compromise her own ideal of the *Nihon*

no onna. She can die as well and bravely as she can live; and often, at a crisis, recalls in her own simple way the example of Lucretia, of whom the poet says that in sinking to the ground she carefully arranged her garments, "ne non procumbat honeste."

Nor truly do the Japanese men show themselves so much demoralised by Confucius as openly to regard the female sex as inferior. The proof of that fact is here, that when a family contains only grown-up daughters, and is at the same time of high position, so that to preserve the name and estates of the line becomes important, it is the custom to adopt into the house a bridegroom for the eldest daughter, who takes her name and passes into almost the self-same position of subordination as does the ordinary Japanese wife. Such a young man is named Yoshi, and lives all his life completely under the thumb of his well-born wife and her mother and father. Moreover, no nation has ever yet been able to make slaves of its women. The function and mission of woman is to rule, not by outward symbols of authority, but by the far stronger and subtler control of the inner affairs of human life; and Voltaire was never so wise a philosopher as when he wrote under the "portrait d'une femme" at Versailles:

> Quiconque tu sois, voilà ton maître;
> Elle est, elle fût, ou elle va être.

The Japanese woman, like all her sex everywhere, in dealing with the blundering laws of men, has

known how to take advantage of the deplorable legislation due to Konfutze, and to mould it into a state of things which furnishes her with an ideal, and leaves her free to rule the house, and to become in very many cases indispensable for it. But there is no denying the fact that they live from birth to death upon the good-will of those to whom they practically belong, while they owe the pleasures and the independences of their generally blameless existence to their own sweet, patient, and self-contained natures.

What has been said will help to show the American or English reader that there do not enter into the life of the Japanese girl any of those ideas of flirtation, love-making, courting and the rest of it which count for so much in a European or American girlhood. In the middle and lower classes she is fairly free to come and go, to see her friends, male and female, and to mingle with the gay crowds of holiday-makers in festivals and at Matsuri; but she will have so little to do with the choice of her husband that her light and gentle mind leaves the subject entirely alone. Nor is her physical nature in any degree whatever a passionate one. The Japanese temperament is too artistic, too measured, too tranquil, too constantly governed, for wild flights in direction of the desire or imagination; and I should be inclined to say that in actual bodily and spiritual nature the Japanese woman is one of the purest and most refined on earth. Nevertheless, it is not to be concealed that her views upon many questions

that are called "moral" would startle her civilised sisters. There are always two moralities, in truth—the eternally established code of right and wrong which makes fidelity of mind and purity of thought

A GEISHA.

eternally divine, and those more or less conventional systems which different nations have constructed in different ways, and which especially, and often very stupidly, touch upon the details of the relations

between the sexes. All depends upon the point of view taken by each race, and it will go far to help outside peoples to understand the Japanese woman if they get firm hold of the fact that she regards life and its conduct from a standing-place wholly diverse from that of her English or American sister. Physical honour is for these last the supreme virtue, and all the perspective of their moral landscape is more or less constructed with that for the foreground. Wholly otherwise is the view of the Japanese maiden. She looks at life from the eminence of a perfectly ingrained loyalty, of an obedience which she has trained herself to make unquestioning; and when these counsel her to face any danger, to accept any dishonour, nay, to perpetrate any crime, she assents sooner than fail in devotion to father, husband, and family. Naturally to the last degree nice in her habits; delicate, refined, and reserved; she will not hesitate, and never has hesitated, to sacrifice herself—as we should say—"body and soul" to the dictate of this devotion and of these duties. That is, of course, a very exceptional necessity in Japanese families, but it does sometimes arise; and when it does arise, though the Japanese woman is by nature as proud of her purity as the little ermine which dies under the stroke of the hunter rather than enter a refuge that has been soiled, she sets utterly aside those dictates of chastity which are imperative with us, and accepts conditions of existence justly considered here improper and repulsive. Yet even these, be it said, cannot alter

the original elevation of her nature, and Japan presents the only examples known to my experience where women who would be called and thought "outcast" in any other country remain "ladies" in spite of leading a life of the lowest type. It is as if their placid souls passed through the mire and dust of depravity on some invisible *geta* like those that lift their little feet high out of the mud of the Tokyo streets during a rainstorm. To go deeply into such a subject is, however, not possible for me in these pages. For myself, if I have sometimes bitterly said that the Japanese men do not deserve from their gods the splendid gift of the Japanese women, it is when my mind has been full of incidents like the above; yet, precious as are the qualities of the sex in that gentle and pleasant land, I would rather see Japan again wildly revolutionised, and all her old manners disappearing before the waves of our modern civilisation, than that the system should continue which year by year immolates these high-hearted victims.

If anybody wants to know how deeply the motive of such self-surrender is blended into the thoughts of the nation, he should read the story of The Loyal Ronins, told in Mitford and summarised by Miss Bacon in her admirable book.

From our point of view, it seems indeed absolutely discreditable that a noble family like that described in this ancient tale could possibly consent to such domestic infamy; but what I have written above, and what Miss Bacon says as well, must be borne

in mind, that the point of view in their moral landscape is wholly different to ours; that enormous value is attached to fidelity of soul and comparatively little, except as its token and touchstone, to fidelity of body; and that the father looks upon his daughter as something born to serve him, and eventually to pass from his hands into the possession of others, without his retaining any except the slightest hold upon her. Positively, the self-dedication of children to parents is so complete in Japan, as also in China, that the wholesale acceptance of it by the daughter, as well as by the son, naturally tends to draw the father into taking the execution of it for granted to the fullest extent and the farthest point. The Japanese unmarried girl in the middle and lower classes makes all the clothes for her parents, sweeps and cleans the house, cooks the food and waits at meals; and many of these acts are still performed out of tender filial feeling even in the houses of the upper classes. The odd thing is, that this devotion is not accompanied by any particular personal respect, apart from the universal decorum and etiquette of Japanese domestic life. I have seen a Tokyo girl who would have done all that has been alluded to for the sake of her aged father, send him out in the rain to buy fish and rice; and it cannot be too often repeated, in order to understand the Japanese moral code, that it is with the children an ingrained standard of action which has to be and must be observed, rather than that personal passion of affection which springs up in our households and might prompt English or

American girls to any and every filial service that was not dishonourable. Let me add that among most of the educated and respectable Japanese, especially in the families of noblemen and ex-samurai, the feelings that we ourselves experience of horror and disgust at the selfish complaisance of parents are largely shared, while the public sentiment daily grows in Japan which condemns, and will eventually, let us hope, abolish the possibilities of such a perversion of one of the noblest of human virtues. Curious it is also to notice how this intense devotion of the children thrives in an atmosphere uncheered by any of those signs and tokens of parental love to which we are accustomed. Children are embraced; never grown-up daughters. But then it is to be understood that Japanese affection is wholly undemonstrative. In that land, even with lovers there are no hand-shakings, no ordinary tender expressions, no caresses. Kissing is as unknown in Japan as waltzing; and is thought, indeed, when witnessed among Europeans, to be a very animal and low-minded way of expressing attachment. You might intimately know a dear friend of either sex in the land of Japan for twenty years without once touching them, and perhaps it is this singular, universal immunity from bodily contact which helps to keep alive the proud and sustained reserve of the Japanese woman as regards her person. Let it be added, that the habit of fidelity and devotion thus cultivated toward parents passes into the mind of the Japanese woman and characterises all her social relations. She is naturally and by education

the most faithful creature imaginable. No infidelity on the part of her husband or her lover leads her, for the sake of revenge or despair, to imitate the evil example. A breach of duty on her part as a wife is really almost unknown, and she will extend the same habitual and established faithfulness to relations less binding than those sanctioned by such marriage forms as do exist in Japan. So long as she is well treated and not perforce obliged to look for the necessities of life elsewhere, she makes it a point of honour to maintain her part of any temporary and irregular alliance, and so long as she can possibly put up with bad conduct on the part of him who ought to be equally faithful to her, she tries to meet every vexation with patience and silence, uttering with gentlest lips the constantly heard phrases: "*Damatte*," or "*Shikata ga nai*."

There are many who think that the spread of education will put right what is wrong at present in the social and civil life of these quiet and dutiful beings. Just now, it is not very much that the average Japanese woman knows, although schools and colleges are everywhere increasing. They learn to write in *Katakana* and *Hiragana*, and acquire enough of the Chinese characters to read the signs on the shops and the commoner phrases used in correspondence. Then, also, most of them master the strings of the samisen and kôto, and perhaps learn the arts of arranging flowers, of keeping accounts, of the special etiquettes of social existence, and above all, needlework. They make, unmake,

and remake all their own clothes; and that is about the only form of property which the Japanese woman generally owns. Fashions never change in the country, and since a girl gets at her marriage a complete outfit from her family, augmented by presents from her husband, she is provided to the end of her existence with materials for unpicking and remaking. Almost the only occupations which a woman can take up with are those of dressmaking and teaching, but for the last she must have passed through some of the new schools and colleges, which teach Eastern and Western learning together, to the sad fatigue of many a youthful feminine pupil, who brings home at night from them a headache as heavy as the books that her musumë carries. Moreover, it is a fact not to be denied, that this foreign education does affect in a rather disastrous way the graceful manners of the girls; and whether it be desirable or not, you can always tell the scholars of a missionary school, or Daigakko, by some slight lack of that perfect grace and ancient decorum which is observable in the unsophisticated Japanese maiden. This new education, it may be added, too often produces discontent without providing any way of allaying it. The instructed Japanese girl knows too much to be contented any longer with her career, and yet is utterly unable to find any means of obtaining the independence that could alone rescue her from it. As matters stand, it is safe to say that she does not gain as much from Western learning as she loses in regard of old-world tranquillity and sweetness of

manner, with that soft acquiescence in the traditional state of things which made her pass this life on the whole so easily, from the hour of the *miya maèri*, when she went first into the temple as a baby, to the hour when they burn her cream-white little body and nothing is left of the gentlest of human creatures except a handful of grey ashes. There is another sort of education, however, which does great good, and that is the presence and the frequent society of English and American ladies, who, I have always thought, as wives of missionaries or as residents of the land, effect more solid amelioration than all the sermons and all the school-classes put together. In meeting the best of these, the Japanese girl sees for herself how perfect freedom may go with grace, goodness of heart, and humility; and in such sweet instances she sees also how the European or American husband can preserve towards his wife a chivalrous submission and a daily tender attention without forfeiting his manliness or the natural rights of his sex. This influence is working steadily for good on the minds of the people, and it is a curious illustration of it that a Japanese gentleman in European dress behaves in public with much more regard and politeness to his Japanese wife than when they both wear the native costume. Still, it was no farther back than the 11th of February 1889, that the Emperor for the first time made his progress through the streets of the capital with the astounding sight of the Empress riding in the same carriage. And even his Majesty, enlightened and progressive as he is, when I had the honour of

being present at the imperial garden-party last year, came upon the lawn where the ambassadors and invited guests were waiting his appearance, not arm in arm with his august consort, but preceding her by many steps. Let me pay the tribute of an admiring sentence to that smallest and sweetest-natured of all Japanese women, the good and patriotic Empress. Childless and disappointed, and doomed to see the diadem of Japan pass to the offspring of another who is not married to the Emperor, even as Japanese marriages go, she has taken the whole country to her motherly heart, and is as true and dutiful an Empress as she is a tender and faithful wife to her august lord.

Japanese legislation is slowly seeking to do more justice to Japanese women. A law has been passed making it impossible for the son of a concubine to succeed to a noble title, and that will apply in future to the imperial household itself. Another law has been established granting to wives the right of claiming a divorce; but this, in the nature of things, will almost never be availed of, because there is literally no future in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred for the woman who should act upon it. Outside the law, nevertheless, public opinion is a considerable force in Japan, and it is this more than any statute which at present in many ways protects the Japanese wife from too great wrong. A man who capriciously turns his wife away, or is unkind or violent to her (a thing, to tell the truth, almost unknown in the country), will find his neighbours and friends

making things decidedly hot and unpleasant for him.

Side by side with education many foreign friends of Japan rely upon the spread of Christianity in the country. No doubt, as far as it does spread, it carries with it ideas of woman's rights and woman's true mission immeasurably higher than those which Confucianism has promulgated far and wide in Mongolian Asia. Eventually I hope it will win a great, if gradual, social victory on this ground, but as a creed I believe it will find the necessity of amalgamating much of the Buddhism which it sees occupying nine-tenths of the area of Japan. There is nothing to my mind fundamentally hostile between Christianity and Buddhism, nor do I think it impossible that Christianity may do what Buddhism itself did when it first entered Japan, and take possession of the hearts of the people by silently adopting many of their national ideas. Shintoism, the religion of the Emperor and the court, is not a religion at all, but a cult of ancestors derived from the ancient nature-worship of the land. The Japanese people themselves are, in matters of theology, the lightest-hearted in the world. Their religion has been well defined as "a mixture of fun and fear," but the women are, all the same, sincerely pious, and there is no Japanese home without proofs of this; while one sees in the streets the laughing musumë, the gaily-attired geisha, and the hard-working coolie woman stop all alike at the gate of the temple, to enter, to pull the altar bell, to

mutter the little devout prayer, with closed eyes and head bent down, and then to drop into the temple chest the hard-earned coin, while the small palms are clapped together to let Heaven know that its "honourable attention" is no longer requested. Certainly, if missionaries only knew how to be enlightened and adaptive, there could be no richer or better soil to cultivate than that of all these simple, sweet, and impressionable hearts.

One point in which the Japanese women are above and beyond all their Christian teachers is in the tender regard they pay to their dead, and in the ceremonies, full of a strong and sublime faith in the future life, which they make at their graves. One of the duties of the Japanese wife and daughter, never neglected, is to visit from time to time the tombs of her husband's ancestors or of her own parents, and to place there fresh branches of the pure *sakaki*, and to see that the little resting-places are kept neat and clean. Nor has any religious teacher, however exalted, a single page or line of any lesson to teach the Japanese woman about the perfect fulfilment of her duty to her children or to her parents. There is no Western lady who might not rather take example by the ceaseless grace of these domestic relations. Never do the Japanese children leave or return to the house, in any rank of life, without prostrating themselves before the tender mother, and softly asking permission of absence, "O itôma." Never does she return, but all the

children and servants throng to the threshold, and with foreheads upon the mats and soft ejaculations of welcome, salute the "O kaeri," the "honourable re-arrival." It is to the mothers that is due the passing onwards from generation to generation of that gentle inheritance of Japanese good manners, and for the most part the children repay this rich affection. There is almost no end to the indulgence with which they are treated. The story is told of a sick girl who had the passion to give a garden-party under cherry blossoms in the month of December, and rather than disappoint her wild wish, the father and mother hired artificers to cover the branches of the bare trees in the garden with innumerable delicate blossoms of pink and white tissue-paper, so that the wilful girl might carry out her fantastic purpose.

That which would most of all make the Japanese woman mistress in a larger degree of her destiny, and perhaps bring this about without spoiling the matchless charm of her devotion, her self-denial, her inexhaustible grace, her endless delicacy of speech and act and bearing, would be to reform the laws of property in her favour. If there were a statute, as exists in France, obliging the father, under certain proper conditions, to provide for his daughter as well as his son, we should see a large number of Japanese women made independent of the vicissitudes of life, and soon a new state of things would arise. If, again, it were possible to extend to Japan the movement which in England and America has

provided so many women with honourable and lucrative employments in public and private offices, that also would open a wide door for the escape of many a gentle Japanese maid from the stern necessity that confronts her now of marrying without love, and depending all through her life upon her father, her husband, and her children.

All comes to this, therefore, that in larger and more generous laws respecting the endowment of female children, and in the opening up of new fields of employment to the sex in general, seem to dawn the best hopes of justice for the Japanese woman. But even while one breathes such aspirations of change and new times for her, a chilling fear comes upon the mind lest, in touching with the coarse hand of Western civilisation that consummate product of the isolated faiths and systems of Japan, we find spoiled for ever the old-world charms of her nature, and see depart beyond recall virtues and qualities never to be replaced, as they have never been surpassed. This same Japanese woman, with all her shortcomings, ignorances, littlenesses, and absurdities, is like the brilliant and flower-loving butterfly whose existence she often imitates. One rash touch upon the light and glad wing leaves her still flying, perhaps, but may destroy the dainty delicacy of that jewelled embroidery upon its delicate vans. On the whole, she has been up till now very placidly happy, like her mothers and grandmothers before her, and that is more than I quite dare to predict for her daughters and grand-

daughters, when, as seems inevitable, all around her must alter, and new times bring her new manners, while in her astonished little ears "the great world spins for ever down the ringing grooves of change."

THE EMPEROR OF JAPAN.

VII

JAPANESE WRESTLERS

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VII

JAPANESE WRESTLERS

WRESTLING in Japan has, for centuries past, been cultivated as a high athletic science, seriously pursued by a large professional class, and extremely popular throughout the Empire. This is the special time of year when, and Tokyo is the central place where, the chief annual exhibition of the national sport comes off; and thus, for more than a week past, nothing has been talked about so much as the great contest going forward between the champions of the Eastern and Western side of "Dai Nippon" at Ekoin. Ekoin is in a north-western central quarter of the vast Japanese capital, and there, twice a year, the all important *Sumo Banzuke*, or wrestling tournaments, are held. The number of registered wrestlers —*sumotori*—in Japan may be reckoned, probably, by thousands, but only picked and certificated men are privileged to appear at Ekoin; yet even these, on the present occasion, amount to no less than 371. Their status has been solemnly decided at the preceding January contest, and, a few days before the summer trials, long catalogues are published, giving the names of the combatants in the rank settled by the elders of the Wrestlers' Guild. These catalogues also arrange and notify in what order the contestants

shall be coupled, although a certain element of chance enters into that. The professional status of each man remains fixed hereby until January next, when he will be promoted or degraded in accordance with the prowess displayed during the present exciting days.

Exciting, indeed, they are; for no Derby Day at Epsom, no University Boat Race, no Waterloo Coursing Cup awakens at home more widespread interest than this prolonged encounter of the West and East in Japan. Everybody has his favourite side, everybody marks his list of cherished champions; and during the *Banzuke*, on all the fine days, the Ginza and Nihombashi roads are thronged with jinrikshas trundling down to the scene of action. On the fine days only, because just at this part of the year the *ume-no-ame*, or "rains of the ripening plum," are frequent, and the management wisely notify that they will only open the wrestling theatre when the weather is good. The funds of the great association are maintained from the show, and it is therefore necessary to utilise thoroughly its popularity. Twice, accordingly, this past week, the "Garden" has been closed; but we have had several brilliant days of sport, despite the weather, and metropolitan enthusiasm is just now at its height, since the time has come for the deciding matches. It would hardly be tolerated if I should inflict on the British public a complete catalogue of these Tokyo *lutteurs*, but, for a sample of the titles which they bear, the couples of the first class shall be here appended. They stand as follows:—

WRESTLERS OF THE FIRST RANK.

	East.	West.
National Champion	Nishinoumi	—
Champions	Konishiki	Yawatayama.
1st Sub-Champions	Hibikimasu	Otohira.
2nd Sub-Champions	Ichinoya	Tanino-oto.
1st	Asashio	Wakaminato.
2nd	Hokkai	Onigatani.
3rd	Datenoya	Tomonohira.
4th	Dewanoumi	Hiranoto.
5th	Imaizumi	Shitenryu.
6th	Chitosegawa	Ozutsu.
7th	Odate	Shinrlki.
8th	Takanoto	Onigake.
9th	Sotonoumi	Chiyenoya.
10th	Orochigata	Hibikiya.
	Ayanami †	Tsurugizan. †

The Japanese ring-names for the first four are respectively Yokozuna, Ozeki, Sekiwaki, and Komusubi —all technical appellations. Yokozuna, for example, means the "wearer of the Emperor's belt." The athletes with a mark to their titles were ill at the last match, and hold their high rank provisionally. The Eastern "crack" Nishinoumi has no compeer, being champion; and the first on the Western list, Yawatayama, has been absent, having sprained one of his mighty arms. These names, so strange to your eyes, with scores of others like them, are as familiar to Tokyoites as those of Orme and Flyaway at home; and, if you would know what true "fame" is, you should listen just now to the talk in the tea-houses and 'riksha-stands about Nishinoumi and Otohira and Ozutsu. These and Konishiki, who fight with Nishinoumi for the East, are the four chief favourites.

Very grave and firmly-established are the rules of the Japanese wrestling ring, and not the slightest departure is permitted from them by the judges or the public. There are forty-eight legalised "falls," divided into classes of twelve each. One encounter, unless a draw occur, settles each combat. The regulations as to where, when, and how each man may "clinch" the other are sternly laid down, and the language of the wrestling garden is, in every particular, as clear, positive, and authoritative as the Code Napoléon. The professional wrestlers are a class apart, albeit drawn from all ranks and localities. They are selected for their bulk and muscle; and amid a people so nationally small as the Japanese, the average *sumo-tori* towers like a giant, and swaggers through the crowd like an orange junk among a fleet of fishing sampans. They live like "fighting-cocks"—being huge feeders and drinkers, whom a wire-drawn British pugilist would indeed batter into breathless helplessness in a round or two; but the same skilled pugilist, if clasped in the ponderous embrace of Nishinoumi or Konishiki, would feel like a filbert in a nutcracker. They have patrons who train and feed them, and when they have once taken a good rank in the Tokyo *Sumo Banzuke*, they fill up the year by "starring" in the provinces at local matches. Like all their race, they are, for the most part, good-tempered and honest Titans, who wish to win, but seem to have no desire to do it by cruel or unfair means, albeit there are times and situations when the victor, if he likes, can easily kill

his man. I myself saw a leg broken in an encounter, but it was obviously by accident. The major portion of the bouts seems to be decided chiefly by sheer weight; for, as has been remarked, the men cultivate flesh, and even fat, to the point of vast obesity; but there is displayed a great deal of solid and educated skill besides, and one of the most adroit and successful of the Eastern representatives, Katsuhira —who in my sight hurled over his knee a colossus of flesh and bone—was quite a small man, with muscles of living steel under his smooth brown skin, and little hands and feet which might have become a fashionable lady, concealing enormous strength.

But now let us repair to the Ekoin, and see how the great bi-annual tournament of the *Sumo Banzuke* is carried on. Whirling through a maze of busy Asiatic streets, behind the twinkling legs of our "*kurumaya-san*," we reach at last the scene of action, easily known by thousands of fluttering flags on all sides and the concourse of bare-headed, bare-legged Japanese thronging to the entrance. This is up a narrow lane, where in England nothing but a large force of police could preserve any order; but the Japanese holiday public polices itself. Everybody is good-tempered, smiling, and willing to be jostled; and even if pushed into the tray of fried bean-cakes, or upon the pan of sizzling star-fish, is readily comforted by a "Go busata" or a "Go men nasai." No carriages could well approach, and there are no regulations for any, but my riksha-

man dexterously thrusts his vehicle in between the stall of an *ameya* blowing sugar-birds out of paste and the shop of a dealer in flags and lamps, and promising the obliging tradesman a penny—two *sen* —for taking care of it, passes in with me to the arena. This is at once the most democratic and the most conservative land in the globe. The good fellow, who has pulled me five miles at the speed of a trotting pony, takes his seat on the mats in my box with as good a decorum and as just a self-regard as anybody, and having assumed charge of my boots and placed at my side the tobacco-box and the "honourable tea," proceeds to read to me from the Chinese characters the programme of the afternoon, with many enlightening comments.

The building, if it can so be called, is a vast improvised circular structure of pine stems and bamboos, roofed with cotton cloths, and walled with the same. Its countless tiers of rude seats rise interminably one above another from the wrestling stage in the middle. This is the most carefully constructed feature of the edifice—a low, circular floor, strewed thickly with fine black dust, and surrounded by a ridge of rice-bags, firmly fastened in their places. At four points of its circumference rise as many poles, bound round with different coloured cotton cloth, and under each sits an umpire—one for north, south, east, and west respectively—very correctly attired in high-class Japanese fashion, with *hakama*, *kimono*, *obi*, and all the rest. The wrestling-ring measures about fifteen or sixteen feet

in diameter, inside the rice-bags; and there are two other officials seen within its sacred limits, the umpire and the herald. Both are attired in the ancient Nippon style of a *Samurai*, with projecting shoulder-pieces, hair tied back in a cue, and fans with long strings of purple silk. Round the ring, on the floor of the building, which is perhaps a foot or eighteen inches lower than the ring, you see squatted a dozen or fifteen nearly naked men, of immense bulk in body and limbs, who are the next batch of combatants. Scattered about the circles of expectant people you may discern a good many more of the same sort, distinguishable by their topknots and their huge size; but these, as being for the time spectators, wear the *yukata*, an ordinary bathing-dress of stamped cotton, over their brawny frames. The place will hold 4000 people, and is full almost to the fluttering green and purple cloths of the roof. If we should have a really business-like earthquake just now to shake down the massive beams of fir above our heads, there is here the precise arrangement for such a sweeping catastrophe as might almost get into history. But nobody thinks of that. There are very few women present, since it is not the "mode" for the female sex to assist at such spectacles, though you may note here and there the wife or mother of a champion, or some family party comprising a Japanese lady or two. There is, however, plenty of the Japanese *beau monde*. Here may be recognised to-day, for example, the two Princes Tokugawa and Konoye near the stage,

with the Marquis Date, and there, opposite, Count Tsugaru, with many of our foreign notabilities. Everybody smokes; everybody reads the list of the champions, if they only know the crabbed Chinese characters. A placid chatter fills the huge interior, mingled with the cries of the "tea-boys," "*Yoroshii? yoroshii gozaimas?*"—"Is it well?" "Are you all served?" Empty lunch boxes go out and full ones come in from the neighbouring tea-houses; 4000 painted fans flutter in the hot afternoon air, and four little light-blue tangles of smoke curl upwards from the pipes of the four umpires sitting cross-legged upon their silken cushions.

But see! The umpire reads from a long roll upon a red stick the names of the successive couples who will next contend before us, and then the herald, in a high theatrical voice, proclaims the style and title of the forthcoming pair. This official is known as the *yobi-dashi*, or "caller-forth;" and, as his loud-pitched falsetto terminates, two massive athletes step from below upon the stage, slightly raised above the floor of the hall. They ascend from opposite sides, for one half of the building and of the arena is for the East, the other for the West, and in the contests there is always a Western and an Eastern man. Two of the same party are never matched at Ekoin. Each champion is stark naked, save for a linen rag and a black silk girdle, from which hangs a fringe of silk cords, much resembling that of leather worn by the women of Upper Egypt. Each, as he

slowly and ponderously mounts the platform and steps within the rice-bags, turns his face round to his own side of "the house," and, stretching his left leg high and far into the air, brings down that foot with a thud upon the earth, smites a resounding blow with the flat of his palm on his squared thigh, stretches forth the right leg in balance, slaps that also, and then, without deigning a glance at his adversary, who is going through the same performance behind him, stalks to his corner, wets his lips with water, rubs his mouth with salt, brushes off the sweat from his arms and breast with a square of paper, spits, and swaggers to his place over against his opponent. As they confront each other, each man squats down upon his heels, letting his huge dark carcass descend upon the elastic muscles and ligaments of thigh and calf with a resilient movement, like a barouche settling upon its springs. Upon this the umpire, in an ancient costume of green and gold and purple, with fan in hand, and hair dressed "to the nines," after the old *Samurai* manner, approaches, nicely measures the distance of his men, and, standing with his white stockings astride, levels his fan, and says, "Proceed." The two brown giants lean forward on their hands, now like two gamecocks, pitted almost nose to nose, and, with eyes fixed eagerly upon eyes, watch each other. The inflexible rule is that the "clinch" must be made simultaneously. Neither must get the better of either by any premature motion, and thus, when you

hear a yell and see the giants fly at each other, you are at first disappointed to find that after all, time upon time, it is "no start." One or the other will let his arms drop, or the umpire himself will call out "*Mada! mada!*"—"Not yet! not yet!" The fierce embrace is unlocked, the brawny rivals saunter to their corners, where again they wash out their mouths with water, sakë, or soy, take a little salt for purification, wipe themselves over with paper, expectorate, and then anew crack their huge joints, and crouch down face to face. Again and again this will be repeated. The umpire shouts the disappointing "*Mada;*" one or the other drops his arms; the audience patiently fill their little pipes, but shout "*Sa! yarè*" — "Come, now; begin!" An often-baffled rival will also be heard to exclaim tauntingly, "*Yarè! Yarè!*" At last it is really a fair grapple. The pride of the West, Osutsu, and the glory of the East, Konishiki, are now locked together in the long-expected and decisive struggle. The umpire, letting fall his fan to the very end of its purple string, has cried aloud "*Agatte!*"—"A good grip!"—and walks round and round the enlaced combatants, keenly noting every movement of the strife. The usually placid Japanese public is now all alight with emotion. When young Konishiki has been lifted bodily from earth by the prodigious Osutsu, the West shouts "*Hora! Hora!*" until the bamboo rafters tremble. When the young champion of the East twines his leg round the

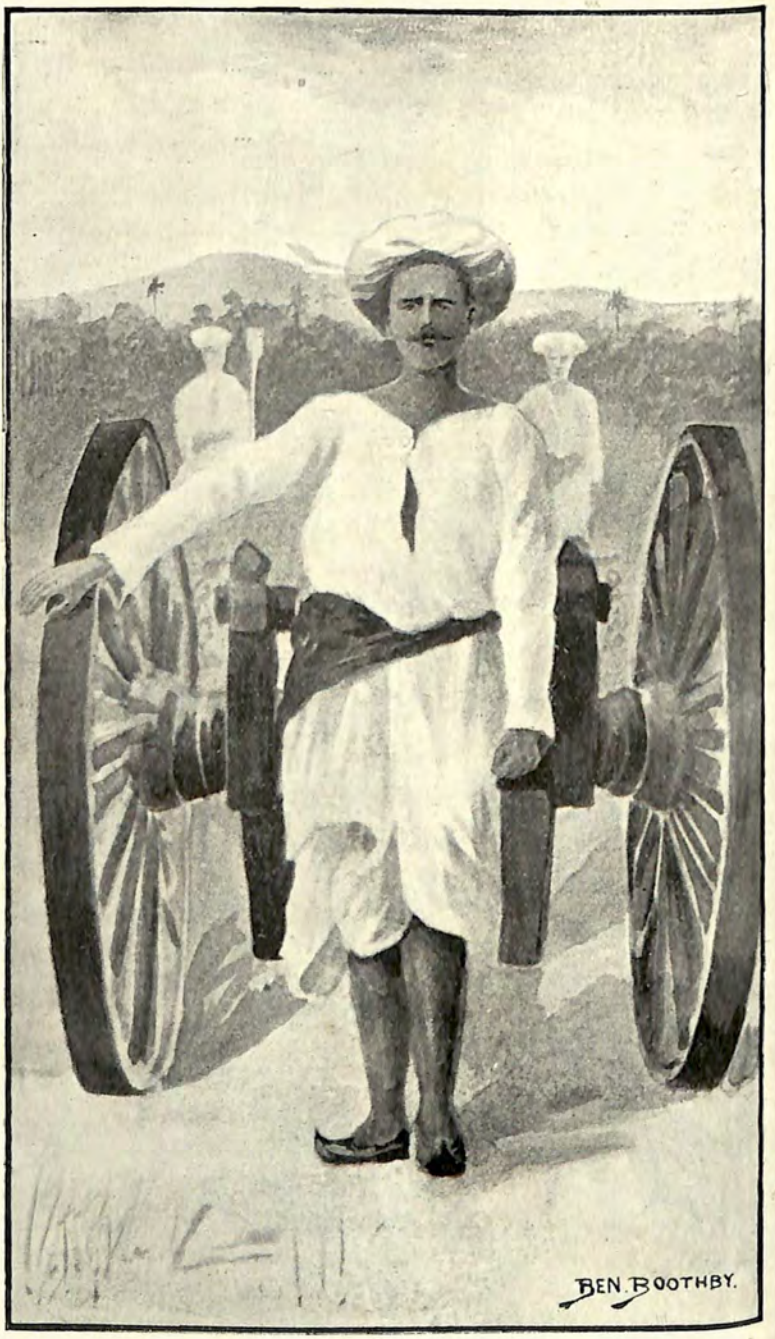
giant's thigh and slips out of his difficulty into a new and commanding position, the other side of the house roars mightily "*Konishiki San banzai*"—"Ten thousand years of life for Konishiki!" Nor, truly, is it otherwise than a good and manly sight to see those splendid frames matched so fairly in bloodless battle; the dusky skin and flesh trained so hard that you mark the other wrestler's hand slip from it as from brown marble; the muscles working underneath like snakes beneath a blanket; the feet so desperately planted, the grasp so implacably kept, each man glaring through the eyes of the other to catch at his next mind, or the coming moment of his weakness. There arrives sometimes an instant when, perfectly equipoised in the strife, deadlocked and simultaneously become quite breathless, the watchful umpire will, by a movement of his fan and the word "*Yoshi!*" part the gasping combatants. But generally—and often very quickly—the match is clean wrestled out. In the bout I am describing the younger athlete conquered, to the greater glory of the East. Ozutsu's vast brawn was laid low, and even thrust outside the rice-bags, and the air rang with the name of Konishiki, while dozens of delighted backers flung their hats and caps upon the stage, exclaiming "*Ageru-zo!*" ("I give you this!"). Such votive head-gear is, of course, all duly brought back again to its owners, and the habit is really a relic of the ancient times, when it was considered becoming to strip yourself to the waist before a superior.

In this way combat succeeds combat during many hours, and the victors of to-day meet each other inside the rice-bags on the morrow. Each conflict presents, of course, its special incidents, but they follow the general character described. Almost all of them are interesting, but when the chief champions meet, the excitement becomes extraordinary, and the foreigner himself cannot keep quite clear of the prevailing enthusiasm. At present it seems that the Eastern side must carry off the glories of this Ekoin summer meeting. It possesses three doughty fighting men who have not yet sustained a fall, to wit, the unconquered Nishinoumi, the gigantic Ho-o, and the lighter but dauntless Konishiki. The West can only boast of one representative whom none has compelled hitherto to bite the dust, but he is a very famous wrestler indeed, the colossal Otohira. It may seem strange to have to apply Titanic epithets to Japanese-born men, but, in truth these *Sumo-Tori* are a special race. There may be a sprinkling among them of strong pure-blood Nipponese drawn from the ranks of sailors, jinriksha-men, and the like, but the majority appear a breed apart, and are said indeed to be of Tungensian extraction, originally from the province of Idzumo. Many are six feet and upwards in stature, and of a great natural bulk, artificially increased. Altogether, the bi-annual *Sumo-Banzukes* of Tôkyô are most certainly "a sight to see."

Tôkyô, *June* 10, 1892.

VIII

AT AN INDIAN CHRISTMAS-TIME



"AT THE LIPS OF THE BLACK FIELD-PIECE." *P.* 161.

VIII

AT AN INDIAN CHRISTMAS-TIME

It is natural to think of Christmas-tide as we see it in England—in most years wintry and white, as if the earth decked herself in a new and pure mantle to celebrate the birthday of the Divine Teacher of "peace and goodwill." But if one travels a great deal, or reflects only a very little, it will soon be experienced how there are Christmas-tides of all sorts, and of every variety of weather, upon this globe. Christmas Day in the Holy Land, where Christmas Days began, is, as often as not, very warm indeed. If it were not so, the shepherds would not have been watching their sheep out of doors when they heard that heavenly music. In Cape Colony and at the Antipodes, December the twenty-fifth, as likely as not, will prove the hottest day of the Southern Hemisphere; and in India, though the universal festival of Christendom falls in what is called the "cold season," the Anglo-Indian has to make an effort of imagination, amid the sights and sounds of tropical life, to realise that it is indeed Christmas-time, and that, although climate, prudence, and the doctor may unanimously forbid, he and his household must eat plum-pudding and mince-pies, and make believe to be amid the old surroundings.

As one lives, and works, and wanders about the world, a vista of Christmas-times is gradually formed, down which the mind casts retrospective glances, recalling some that were silver with snow, some which were golden with sun-glare, some which were of the old homely type, and some which were spent in wild places ignorant of English ways and English faces. There is no reason why there should be anything sad in the retrospect. All of them were interesting in their way; all brought some fresh reason to be grateful for the rich delight and beautiful variety of life; and if, as is probable, there are more to come in this existence, or else in a series of much better existences, why should so much ado be made by any of us about transient troubles? It should not in the least degree affect well-ordered minds with melancholy to look back along the avenue of fifty or sixty Christmas Days, even though they will wistfully remember at what points in the long road this or that true companion turned aside to a higher but hidden path. It is good to live and good to die, and the stupidest thing in all philosophy is pessimism, as the most foolish belief on all the earth is unbelief. Let sensible folk rather learn to say with Chaucer:

> Unto this day it dothe my hertë boote
> That I have hadde my worlde, as in my time.

I for one recall with a quiet and grateful pleasure all the particular stages of the vista—the Christmases in England, the Christmases upon the ocean,

the Christmases in India, the Christmases in Egypt, in Bulgaria, in America, in Greece, in Algiers, in Japan. Which Christmas-time shall I write about to-day? Shall it be one out of the hot and sunny Yuletides? An Indian Christmas Day, with perhaps a story to it, not the less useful if it contrasts stormy epochs of the past with present peace, and primitive passions with the things which are "lovely and of good report"? An Indian Christmas-time let it be!

I was in India during all the dark days of the Great Mutiny in 1857 and its following years. That seems, and truly is, a long while ago—so long ago that another Hindostan has since arisen. At a very early age I was appointed Principal of the Government College at Poona, in the Deccan, and the Sepoy rebellion was in full blaze when I landed at Bombay with my wife and child. The siege of Delhi was in progress; scanty but precious reinforcements were pouring in from various points to the hard-pressed British troops. Our own vessel—an old paddle-steamer called the *Pottinger*—carried out 300 soldiers and officers of all sorts; and during the voyage to Bombay constant practice with pistols and other weapons went forward. At Cairo, whence we had still to cross the desert in vans, we met wounded officers and men returning home from the first Indian fights. All kinds of ugly news encountered us on the way, yet it was a very light-hearted ship's company on board the old paddle-steamer, albeit many among us were destined never to see England again. I especially remember a young

civilian who was soon afterwards murdered in the South Mahratta country by a rebel Rajah, and also an engineer officer named Glastonbury Nevill. The latter repeatedly assured me that he had a fixed presentiment he would fall; and, too truly, the first round shot fired at Rajgurh cut him in two.

We landed; and how beautiful, and new, and wonderful India seemed, despite the desperate crisis which was pending. Never shall I forget that first Christmas season in the Deccan, nor, indeed, my first morning in India. Everybody had to be at his post, and even I, a mere teacher, was ordered up by "John Company Bahadur" to my college within an hour of arrival. Thus all night long we journeyed through the Concan, and up the Ghâts, and over the table-land of the Deccan in a mysterious darkness, meeting long lines of cotton carts, and files of sepoys, and groups of country people with their heads swathed up in cloths, but seeing nothing of India except the white dust and the phantom figures in the starlight, until the dawn broke over the flat-topped hills of Poona. But then how bright and strange, and full with delightful novelty of bird and beast, of tree and flower, of men and women and children, and their ways and words, this Eastern world appeared! I could hardly be persuaded to go in to breakfast out of the great hot Indian garden, so absorbed had I become in the realisation of what I had read about. The kites circling round and round in the cloudless pale blue sky; the mynas, with their yellow beaks and legs, chattering and strutting; the bee-eaters,

bronze and green, darting about in chase of the gorgeous butterflies, whose wings—crimson and black or blue and silver—they strip away before devouring the body, until the ground beneath their perch was like a painter's palette; the mongoose sniffing around the snake's hole; the lively-coloured lizards glancing in and out among the great blue blossoms of the convolvuli; a swarm of rose-necked parroquets flashing with loud screams through the mango-trees, and settling in a green cloud upon the silk-cotton tree; the red and emerald "coppersmith" hammering away on his branch in the tamarind; the sun-birds, with plumage of canary and purple, plunging their tiny bills into the trumpet-flowers; the vultures grimly perched in black rows on the wall; the incessant crows everywhere busy and noisy; and also everywhere scuttling up and down, in and out, those little striped squirrels, which you see all over the Indian Peninsula. Do you know why they are striped with five long dark grey marks? It is because the god Shiva saw one of them once dipping his bushy tail into the Bay of Bengal time after time, and shaking it out over the shore. "Absurd little geloori!" the god said, "why do you do thus?" "Oh, Thousand-Handed," the squirrel replied, "the palm-tree holding the nest which contains my wife and children has fallen into the water by reason of a typhoon, and I am trying to bale the Bay of Bengal dry with my tail, to save my dear family." Upon that the deity smiled graciously, and, stooping down, stroked the tiny beast, leaving on its back five marks of his finger and

thumb, and afterwards commanded the ocean to retire until the little squirrel had recovered his nest and belongings.

Yet, although the glories and wonders of nature in India absorbed me a great deal more than the slight personal dangers of the time, even my quiet and learned retreat was not entirely outside the troubles of that period. The Government of Bombay has since built a spacious and splendid edifice for the Deccan College; in my time we were housed in an ancient but picturesque palace of the Peishwas, the old Maharatta kings, in the heart of the city. Its carved teak columns, green quadrangles, and shadowy Oriental halls used to make me very proud of being "Principal," and from the very beginning I liked my dusky students—of whom there were some 500—and wished sincerely to be good friends with them. Yet at the commencement an awkward thing occurred. I used to repair in the hot morning by bullock-cart or palanquin to the college, returning every afternoon on horseback; and one morning I saw a notice in Marathi writing, unsigned by me, upon the gateway. I ordered it to be taken down and read to me, whereupon it proved to be an offer of 10,000 rupees for the Principal's head. To treat this seriously would have been a sad mistake; so, knowing that Hindoos are as susceptible as children to badinage, I assembled the classes, had the rebellious document read aloud, and then made a little speech, saying how glad I was I did not know the authors of the offending paper, since if I did they

would have to be denounced, and blown from guns, or hanged. Not knowing them, nor wanting to know them, I was free to express my satisfaction at having my head estimated at a sum so handsome, and I thanked my anonymous enemies for the delicate compliment. At the same time, I added, my hope was strong that that head would prove more useful to all of them on my shoulders than off, and I invited such as were disaffected at least to try the experiment. As a matter of fact, even the peaceful Deccan College, being full of Brahman students, was also full of foolish and windy elements of rebelliousness, and a high police authority sent a private application to me to admit as scholars into the institution two or three young natives, who, seemingly intent on learning, would watch and overhear and eventually report to the department. I indignantly refused. I had gone there to teach my pupils, and to be taught by them—not to betray their temporary follies and see some of them perhaps cast into prison or executed. I was reported for my obstinate refusal, but Lord Elphinstone—then governing Bombay for the Company—privately upheld me, only intimating that I would have to be personally answerable for the good behaviour of the students, since I was so inflexible in their protection. And I think this got, somehow, to the knowledge of the young Brahmans, for we did become great friends, and days as happy as any in my life were afterwards passed in that ancient Mahratta palace among my dark scholars, while outside us the thunder of war rolled, and the

gallant English regiments held up against fierce and frightful odds the flag of John Company, which was soon afterwards to be transferred to Her Majesty the Queen, Kaisar-i-Hind; Adhirajni.

I well remember that particular Christmas, and a strange and moving story of the Great Mutiny, which I picked up in the jungle, upon one of the many hunting excursions I was in the habit of making from Poona. For many years past I have given up gun, rifle, and fishing-rod—not because I was, or am, weary of carrying them, for the passion of woodland wandering is as strong as ever with me, but because the beauty, wonder, and delight in life of the wild creatures grew upon me so much that I can no longer kill any of them. Yet, although Emerson justly praises the man who "catalogues the birds without a gun," it is certain that nothing makes any one a naturalist so quickly as a sincere love of the spear and rifle, which lead the sportsman into recesses and private places of the jungle and mountain, where neither he, nor any one else, would otherwise roam. So, in those Indian days, I was up nearly every dawn before the morning star, and away on horseback to the river to shoot snipe and duck; and when a day or two of holiday arrived, off into the open country, round the city, where antelopes abounded, and where you were as likely as not to come across panther, wolf, hyæna, or even bear, and possibly an occasional tiger, while thinking only of florikan and quail. In the darkest days of the Mutiny, when even some of our faithful Bombay regiments

were rebelling, and mutineers were being blown from guns or otherwise executed at Satara, Bombay, and the surrounding stations, the country proper was always fairly safe and quiet. The agricultural people neither understood nor heeded the political storm. Their grievances were not against the Saheb-lôk—the Government—but against the *marwarries*, or money-lenders. If the peasants ever rose anywhere, it was to cut the throats of those *banias* and burn their books; after which they would come back to their oxen and wooden ploughs as tranquil as good little children who have been to wash their hands. We rode, therefore, in much calm and comfort all about the Deccan plains in the very midst of the great mutiny, though its leaders—Nana Sahib and Tantia Topee—were both Mahrattas, and although, in old Mahratta phrase, "the fire was on the hills."

Glad, and free, and rich in sights and sounds to rejoice one who loves this beautiful earth, were those plains of the Deccan at Christmas-time. It is not a tropical vegetation there, but rather resembles the sub-tropical flora of Japan, except that no fir-trees ever mingled with the bamboos and acacias. Between the flat-topped trap ranges, which ran round and round the horizon like castles of giants, vast level tracts extended covered with sheets of smooth rock and bushes of corinda, dwarf thorns, and cactus, with long dry yellow grass, all intersected by deep or shallow *nullahs*—watercourses—then quite dry, but full and flowing in the rainy

season. Here and there a village nestled within its mud walls, and here and there a green garden would shine amid the arid plain, from which came pleasantly the creak of the well-rope dragging up the dripping *mussuks* to irrigate the enclosure, and the song of the bullock-boy, keeping his slow white cattle to their lazy work. Pleasant it was to pitch the tents in such a spot, and to ride forth at daybreak for a long morning's shooting, while the peacocks screamed in the thicket, and the monkeys, newly awakened, scratched themselves by way of toilet, and went about their four-handed business. I learned more than any books have ever taught me from those delicious Indian dawns, noting the marvellous life of the waste, and the ways of its living things. Is there any sight more full of the *joie de vivre*, the ecstasy of existence, than a string of black deer—bucks and does and fawns—pacing at early morning over the unpeopled plain, the sun sparkling on their sleek golden backs and shining ringleted horns—wild with perfect physical health, and vigour of slender limb and shapely muscle; leaping, circling, gambolling, ready to jump out of their velvety skins for pure pleasure to breathe the warm air, and feel the good ground under their little jet-black hoofs? Keenly as I then loved the rifle, I have over and over again laid it aside, to the disgust of my shikari, when we had stalked within shot of such a troop of lovely and happy creatures, and from behind a clump of lemon-grass watched their pretty jealousies and coquetries one with another.

It was about Christmas-time, on one of these rambles, that I came at night, with Luximan, my *ghora-wallah* and constant attendant, to a far-off village in the Deccan. Long ago have the funeral flames consumed what was mortal of that faithful old Mahratta, who knew all there was to know about horses, except that he would insist on painting their tails and manes red at Christmas and other festivals. We had shot hard and ridden far, and, the tents not coming up, I was lodged in a temple of Mahadeo, my cot being placed close beside the red-plastered image of the god. Thus the villagers, male and female, approaching partly to make evening offerings to the deity, partly from curiosity to see the saheb, came, one after the other, close in view, and I noticed among them a comely woman having a singularly sad, refined face, dressed as a widow, with her black hair cut short, and wearing no bangles, nose-ring, armlets, head-disc, or ornaments of any kind. Yes, there *was* one. As she lifted her hands in worship to the god, I observed upon her wrist the slender iron braclet worn by Mahratta wives, which, by a kind of instinctive movement, she hastily pushed back, out of sight, upon her brown arm. Next morning, again, it was she who brought the milk in a brass lota, out of which we sahebs could not drink without defiling it, so she poured the milk forth into an earthen pot, and once again I saw the iron bangle slide down from her forearm to her wrist, and the woman nervously thrust it back into her sleeve. This puzzled me, because

she was in Hindoo widow's dress, and yet carrying the mark of a married woman; but I am glad I did not ask questions of her for the reasons which will be seen.

The next night was cold, and I was warming myself at the camp-fire, where Luximan was also seated, when my thoughts reverted to the sad-faced woman at the temple, and I asked my faithful groom if he knew her by name, and did he understand why she wore the bracelet of a Hindoo wife, being evidently a widow? Luximan looked anxiously about to see if anybody was within earshot. Then he said very seriously, "*Han, main samajhtá hun, Saheb*"—"Yes, sir, I understand—but it is a hidden thing, which holds the lives of men in its silence. Only if the Presence will promise never to speak of it may I tell what I know of Sita, the milk-woman." I readily undertook to respect his confidence, and then, in his own way, which must be made here much briefer and plainer, he related to me what follows:—

Sita was a very pretty Mahratta girl of low caste, who had been betrothed and married to a sepoy in one of the Bombay regiments, named Govind; and this young man, for his good conduct and soldierly qualities, rose to be a havildar, or non-commissioned officer, and was popular alike with the rank and file and with his superiors. Govind had a half-brother named Wittoba, almost exactly like him in features and figure, so much so that people not of the village would easily mistake one for the other; and whether from this similarity of nature, or whatever cause,

Wittoba also became deeply enamoured of Sita. He was, nevertheless, very much attached to his half-brother, but, knowing his love to be sinful and fruitless, after vainly endeavouring to overcome it, which the daily sight of the beautiful Sita rendered impossible, he left the village, and enlisted as a soldier in another regiment of the Bombay army. Thus matters stood when the summer of the year 1857 brought the great Mutiny, and Govind, who had been punished and degraded for some trivial fault, was angry, and allowed the emissaries of Tantia Topee to undermine his loyalty. He became "faithless to his salt," attended the secret meetings of the disaffected in Bombay, and was one of those whose treasonable designs were overheard and denounced by Mr. Forjett, the Police Commissioner. When the regiment moved up into the Deccan, half of it was ripe for mutiny, but the ringleaders were narrowly watched, and at a fitting moment were disarmed and arrested; so that, the proofs of guilt against Govind two others being overwhelming, he and they were sentenced to be blown from guns at Sattara.

Wittoba's regiment, like most of those composing the Bombay army, remained loyal, and a wing of it was quartered in the same station. Thus it happened that on the night before the execution, when Sita was sitting in her hut, rocking herself to and fro in her wifely misery, after the manner of Indian women in deep grief, a sepoy in his white undress uniform of cotton, with the red Mahratta turban, entered her house, which had the usual two rooms divided by a

bamboo screen and curtain. It was Wittoba. He sat down ont he floor opposite to the weeping wife, and for some time no word was spoken. Then this dialogue ensued:—

"Evil hath come to thy threshold, Sita! and sorrow upon thy heart. To-morrow they will kill thy husband."

"Alas! it is so. Oh, Shiva! Shiva! why did he listen to those wicked men who bade him betray his salt?"

"They were foxes who tricked him, and he was a hare to be beguiled. It is a dreadful death, Sita! You will not have his body to burn upon the wood and the cow-cakes. The breath of the cannon blows it into dust and air. I have seen it; the end is terrible."

"I know, Wittoba, I know. Why do you talk thus? What is the use of breaking a broken chatty? My heart is heavy enough already."

"*Dilbur mut ho!* Don't let your heart be heavy! I have come to lighten it!"

"You? How?"

"Sita! I can save Govind from the mouth of the big gun."

"Why will you talk lies? Nothing and no one can save my husband."

"I speak no lie. I can save him. He lies to-night in the chowki by the artillery-ground, chained and alone. I am one of the relief guards in the early morning. I can enter, on this or that pretence, just before they parade for the execution. I can

open his fetters, can put upon him my uniform, and give him my musket and bayonet—taking his own prison clothes; and we are so alike in face and form that no man will know, in the early light, and in the trouble of the hour, that Govind has become the sentinel and Wittoba the prisoner. The gun will boom; I shall be like the chaff you shake from that winnowing fan, and my brother will come here to you at night, and you can go away into the hills together."

"Brother of my husband! why do you say all this?"

"Because I love you, Sita, more than life! Because I would buy with my life one hour of your love. Listen! This is what I am come to speak. Let me stay with you here to-night, till the wolf's tail comes into the sky, and then what I have told you I swear by the cow that I will surely do."

"Wittoba! This is deadly sin."

"It is not sin for you to save the life of your husband."

"It is deadly sin that you should desire his wife."

"I will abide that. I have weighed it all. The three worlds are less to me than once to hold you in my arms. I say this shall be my sin, not yours. Will you have your husband live or die?"

"Govind! Govind!"

"Only one hour — then you shall have saved him."

"But, Wittoba, if it could be—if it might be—and afterwards you did not keep your promise?"

"I am mad with love of you, Sita; but I am no liar. I swear to you, by the Great Mother, that I will do this deed, and stand at the gun's mouth to-morrow morning instead of Govind. Decide! Say yea or no, for the night weareth away."

"Yea, then! For my lord's sake I will do this grievous wrong to my lord. May Heaven forgive, for well I know he never will! But if thou dost fail in thy pledge, the curse of Chittore light upon thee."

"I shall not fail."

* * * * * * * *

When the last jackals were stealing homewards in the grey of that fatal morning, Govind, the havildar, was awakened by a hand upon his breast. It was Wittoba, the sepoy, in regimental uniform, armed, and bearing a bowl of hot conjee and some chupatties. "Rise, brother," he whispered, "and be silent! They bade me bring to thee the last of thine earthly meals, but while thou dost eat I will break apart these chains, and take off *kapre* and *juta*, and change apparel with thee. We are as like as two leaves of a milk-bush, and thou shalt fix bayonet and march forth to keep the ground, while I take thy place at the gun. Nay! no refusal, and no thanks. This has to be. Afterwards shalt thou know why." With hurried explanations

Wittoba half forced, half persuaded Govind to comply, and—once thrust forth free from the guard-house, dressed in uniform, the bugles sounding, and muffled drums beating—bewildered, wondering, rejoicing, remorseful—the redeemed man went mechanically through the duty of the day.

They brought forth Wittoba, supposing him to be Govind, and would have bound him, like the others, to the gaping cannon-mouth. But he saw his brother mournfully regarding; and desiring, perhaps, that Sita should know how faithfully he had kept his guilty bargain, he walked directly to the front of the gun, and, standing close to the muzzle, erect and proud, waved away with his hand those who carried the cords, saying; "*Bundhun nuko*" ("Do not tie me"). Something irresistibly heroic in his fearless air made the British officer nod a chivalrous compliance, and they left him there unfastened, at the lips of the black field-piece, while the artillery-man pulled the lanyard.

When Govind and Sita were resting that night at a temple, on their way to the village in the hills, she asked what her husband saw as the smoke cleared away, and he replied, "I saw only a red turban, rolling, and a waistband which twisted and twisted along the maidan—if, indeed, I saw so much, for my eyes were dim."

And Luximan said that the wife told all to her husband, and that he left her, neither beaten or cursed, neither praised or blessed; for he said, "Until we come to Swarga I know not to which of

us thou art the wife." And afterwards Sita lived alone, in widow's dress, but always keeping on her arm the mark of her marriage. So that was how I had chanced to see at Christmas-time in the Indian village the hidden iron bracelet of which I have never spoken until now, when there is no longer the slightest danger in speaking.

IX

SOME JAPANESE PICTURES

RICE CLEANING IN JAPAN. *P.* 181.

IX

SOME JAPANESE PICTURES

THE children of Japan charm everybody who visits the country. From the highest to the lowest ranks, and almost without exception, they are the best-behaved, least mischievous, most sedate, demure, correct, amusing, and unobnoxious specimens of minute humanity to be found on the globe. The average American boy, especially if born in well-to-do homes, is an egotistic, noisy, restless little tyrant, who makes a railway saloon or a drawing-room a place of torture to his elders. The average English boy, more shy and silent, is yet by nature full of mischief and suppressed devilry, and is too often capable of the most fiendish cruelty. As for girls, they are everywhere, of course, more docile and gentle than their brothers, and seldom provoke the sensitive or nervous mind to thoughts of infanticide. But the Japanese babies and children—boys and girls alike—delight and comfort the foreign visitor by their ideal propriety. The streets, the houses, the temples, the gardens, the railway lines are free and open to them, for their playground is "all out-of-doors;" yet they never seem to be in the way, or to damage anything, or to forget their good manners,

or break flowers and shrubs, or put stones on the track. They are so preternaturally and prematurely reasonable! This does not imply that they are dull, or indifferent, or lifeless. On the contrary, nowhere is youth so joyous as with "young Japan;" these little ones chirp like sparrows at every corner, and flit from pleasure to pleasure like butterflies in a flower-garden. I think such a pretty state of things is due, first of all, to their gentle, tender, dutiful mothers. Nowhere in this world have small boys and girls more affectionate, patient, devoted bringing-up than the little Japs get on the breasts and at the knees of their *okkâsan*. And this, in after years, they richly return, the reverence for father and mother being the very keystone of the national arch. Filial piety is, next to loyalty, the cardinal virtue of the land, even carrying the people occasionally to extravagant or even criminal lengths. The classic picture of a good son in the Japanese print-shops represents a certain young man who, in the season of mosquitoes, stripped himself bare at bedtime, and so lay down near his parents in order that the mosquitoes might feed on him, and let the honoured elders alone. And lately there was a dreadful case in Tôkyô, where a man actually killed his wife because he had been told that nothing short of that would bring back to health his sick mother. Such a deed, of course, shocked public opinion nearly as much in Japan as it would do in England, but it illustrates the force and prevalence of parental and filial dutifulness in the Empire.

Another reason why the Japanese children grow up so good, so charming, so candid, so amenable, is, I think, because they never heard of such a thing as "original sin," and are never treated on the system which belongs to it. By Buddhist belief, no doubt, every little Jap comes into the world with the mistakes of a previous existence to atone for and to cancel—it is the doctrine of *Karma* or *Ingwa.* But parents, friends, neighbours, and teachers leave all that to Destiny and to the *Kami-Sama;* their part is to treat the small being as a new-come guest into the garden of life, to be received with grace, kindliness, and consideration as a stranger, and not to be bullied and browbeaten into correctness. "Go and see, Jane! what Master Reginald is doing, and tell him not to do it!"—such was the legend of one of Mr. Du Maurier's child-pictures in *Punch*—but a Japanese mother and a Japanese child could never even have comprehended the joke. They do not slap, or thwart, or forbid and constrain the little ones in Japan, although they very strictly train them to make bows, and to be silent and submissive and respectful; and it is a great recommendation of what may be called the anti-Solomonic plan that the children repay courtesy with courtesy, and consideration by consideration. Moreover, they see so much of their own world in very early days that they do not break forth, like those of Europe, into its wonders and excitements fresh and frisky from the nursery. At five or six weeks of age the Japanese baby goes out into the open air, lashed

on the back of its mother, sister, aunt, or nurse, and there it rides all day long, except at necessary intervals of refreshment, taking its slumber in this peripatetic cradle, and, when awake, seeing everything which goes on in the streets with its little slant-lidded, beady, black eyes, so that, when it comes to the point of being able to toddle for itself, nothing is strange to the observant babe. It owes, also, to that early life in the open air and perpetual motion on the back of some relation or other, a large part of the generally robust health enjoyed by its kind. Japan is of all countries, except England, that wherein the fewest children die between birth and the age of five years; albeit another point in favour of Japanese babies is that they are nursed at the breast until they are two, or even three years old. In every way their world is made very pleasant to them at starting. The towns and villages are full of toy-shops, where the most grotesque and ingenious playthings are sold for their benefit, at the lowest possible cost. When there happens a temple feast—a *matsuri* or *ennichi* —the precincts of the holy shrine are crowded with toy-stalls and the portable shops of the *ame-ya*, blowing, out of bean-paste, all sorts of "sweeties," shaped into dragons, snakes, birds, demons, and the like. Nobody is too proud or grand to carry a baby, or to be seen bearing home through the streets ridiculous creations of fluffy tigers, feathery cocks and hens, or balls of wool and tinsel. At the great wrestling-match this year in Ekoin I

watched a huge *sumotori*, the champion of his class, overthrow his opponent after a tremendous struggle, amid the delighted plaudits of some three thousand spectators, who flung a hundred hats and caps into the ring. Ten minutes afterwards I met the same gigantic hero, outside the wrestling theatre in the street, carrying a bit of a baby on his back, by the side of his little glossy-haired wife, and feeding it over his brawny shoulder with salted plums.

The Japanese children have, by the way, a vocabulary quite their own—just as the jinriksha-men talk their own *patois*, and the Court people use a special form of speech; while even Japanese women employ many words and phrases never heard from the lips of men. One distinguishing feature of the children of Japan are their sleeves. After much observation and meditation in the streets and roadways of the country, one arrives at last at an explanation of the extreme dignity which the little ones exhibit under almost all circumstances. It is due, you perceive, to the long flowing sleeves which they wear. Nothing in respect of dress gives so much importance and presence to the human figure, grown or ungrown, as wide and hanging sleeves; and all the little Japanese, when habited at all, go about in tiny gowns very much resembling those worn by Masters of Art and Doctors of Divinity at Oxford and Cambridge. If ladies only knew how much that is graceful and imposing depends upon deep, long, flowing sleeves, they would abandon the tight fashions of the present time, and go back in this

regard to the beautiful costumes which English dames wore in the days of the Edwards and Henries, and which have been universal in Japan for two thousand years. A whole book might be written about the æsthetic and social value and dignity of long sleeves.

Special days are set apart in the Japanese year for the boys' and girls' festivals. The great day of the girls is March 3, when all the doll-shops in Tôkyô, Kyôtô, and the other large towns, are full of what are called *o hina sama*—models on a tiny scale of the Emperor and Empress, with their court and domestic belongings. These toy establishments are handed down from mother to daughter, and I have seen high-born children playing with *hina sama* three hundred years old and more. The special day for the boys falls on May 5 every year, when the air is full everywhere of great, hollow, floating fish made out of coloured and gilded paper (which the wind inflates), hoisted high upon a tall bamboo pole in front of each abode where a male child has been born. The fish is the carp (*koi*), the universal emblem of courage and perseverance, because he swims so stoutly against the stream, and hardly consents to die when he is cut into thin slices for *sashimi*.

In early years, and, indeed, until the age of eighteen or nineteen, nothing can be too gay and brilliant for a Japanese damsel to wear. The little Nippon maids go about far outvying in splendour the great butterflies of crimson and gold, or of

saffron and silver, which flit around their heads in the gardens and bamboo-groves. Parental affection seems to exhaust itself in devising gorgeous colours and attractive patterns for their little *obi* and *kimono*, while the *jiban*, or underskirt, cannot possibly be too magnificent. If these garments be only of cotton, the mother and father will have them gay; but even the poor children generally manage to wear fabrics half of silk and half of cotton, and the well-to-do always have their clothes composed of silk, or the beautiful silk-crape known as *chirimen*. This last takes the most brilliant dyes quite perfectly, and admits of very lovely decorative effects, in obtaining which nothing is feared except inharmonious combinations. You see young maidens in the streets and the temple-gardens literally glittering with gold, silver, vermilion, sea-green, sky-blue, rose-red, and orange; some wearing an upper dress covered with fans, birds, waving woods, bamboo boughs, or fish; and at a garden-party given by the Princess Mori at Takanawa, I was presented to a young lady—the lineal descendant of the great house of Tokonawa Shoguns—whose *jiban* of azure silk was an embroidered pool of lotus-blossoms, while her *kimono* of tender, creamy *chirimen* had on it Japanese landscapes of rising moons, rice-fields, Fuji-yama, with the snow upon its crest, and suchlike. When the mature age of twenty or twenty-one is reached, these dazzling glories of the toilette are exchanged for sober-hued dresses, grey, dove-colour, tea-colour, fawn, and brown; but

even then the *jiban* may always be as glorious in colour and patterns as fancy dictates, and the *obi* a splendid piece of figured satin. The attire of the boys is in every case quieter and more restrained, and elderly people cannot be clad too soberly.

Japanese girls grow up to be Japanese women without change in their gentleness, docility, or good manners; and Japanese boys continue to appear attractive, candid, free from *mauvaise honte*, and altogether delightful, until they reach the awkward and gawky age, which for a time spoils most lads. The Japanese boy is delightful; the Japanese man is generally intelligent, polite, and, in his degree, worthy; but the Japanese youth, especially in the middle classes, is wont to prove a hobbledehoy and a social nuisance. As scholars and students they are almost faultless. There are no rules of discipline or punishment in the schools and colleges, because none are needed. The pupils are only too anxious to learn, and are always in their places before the master is ready, and keen to continue work when he is tired. They are too apt to think they know a subject when they have only commenced to understand its rudiments; and although always deferential to their *sensei*, the teacher, they will dictate to him, if he permits, the course of study. But a certain number of them, mingling very imperfect modern education with very crude political theories, leave their schools and colleges full of ambitions and desires which are beyond their range, and instead of accepting humble and useful walks in

life, turn into detestable and dangerous agitators, whose want of sense would be contemptible if their inherited disregard of personal risk and their passionate *entêtement* did not render them evils to be reckoned with. These are the *soshi*. Like our own young "baboos" of Bengal, and "reformers" from the Indian Government College, they have got the wind of personal and political conceit in their heads; but, unlike the "baboos," they are not in the least timid. For want of other and better employ, they hire themselves out to unscrupulous politicians as boyish "swashbucklers," to break up public meetings, intimidate nervous statesmen, dominate the voting places with noise and menace, and sometimes even to commit assault or murder. It was one of these unlovely youths who, brooding fanatically over a supposed offence against the *religio loci* of a temple at Isé, assassinated my enlightened and illustrious friend Viscount Mori; and another such threw the bomb which deprived Count Okuma, the Japanese Prime Minister, of a limb. The worst of them are well known to the Government and the police, and when any rather exciting time is coming forward in Tôkyô, and popular disturbance has to be feared, it is not unusual for the Administration to clear them out of the capital by scores or hundreds, obliging them to spend a little of their ill-used leisure at Yokohama or elsewhere, until the temporary excitement has died away in the seat of Government.

The outdoor games of the Japanese children are

much like those of other small folk in various parts of the world; though the ingenuity of the race refines upon them. The *tako*, or kite; the *koma*, or top; the playing-ball, *tama;* the stilts, *take-uma;* the hoop, *taga;* the swing, *bu-ranko;* the skipping-rope, *nawa-koguli;* prisoner's base, *o nigoko;* and *oyama-no-taisho*, king of the castle, are just as popular, with many other familiar pastimes, in Tôkyô as in London. But the natural skill and adroitness of the people improve upon the Western forms of these sports. The kites are much more scientific than ours, with long streamers at the lower corners, and strange little contrivances to produce sounds, explosions, and illuminations in the sky. Japanese tops, which will spin ever so long on a string or a knife-edge, are well known; and as for Japanese ball-play, there is not a little maid of five or six years in the streets who cannot keep two or three of them in the air at once with one hand, while the other holds the umbrella over the bald pate of the rocking baby. Some of their indoor games might be very well introduced among English children, being graceful and merry, yet free from boisterousness. For example, there is the pretty sport of *tsuri-kitsune*, or "fox-catching," at which many may play at once. Somebody unwinds his or her silken sash, and ties it in a half-hitch, or a reefer's knot, so as to make a running-noose, of which two players hold the opposite ends, balancing the noose vertically on the floor. Then any little prize—a sweetmeat or what-not—is laid on

the floor on the far-side of the noose, and one by one the outsiders try to snatch the object safely through the trap, the two players seeking to catch the fox's paw just as it goes into the noose. Great fun is elicited from this, and when a fox is caught, he surrenders all his prizes and takes one end of the snare. Or this is sometimes coupled with our English game of forfeits. Again, there is a quiet and amusing Japanese form of blind-man's buff, *me-gakushi*, where the fun is had with a large soft ball, not hard enough to break anything or to hurt; and the blind man—after turning round three times—throws this very suddenly in a direction as unexpected as possible, any person struck being obliged to take his place. Another form of *me-gakushi* is where the blind man sits in the centre of a large circle made around him by the other players, after he has had his eyes covered, and he is then allowed to talk, make jokes, say anything he can to provoke a giggle or an ejaculation, so that he may specify the exact position in the circle of somebody, and oblige that one to take his place. This is called *ocha-boji*, and admits of the most charming developments.

The "grown-ups" have, for their indoor pastimes —to leave aside music, singing, and, in cultivated circles, the ever-absorbing composition of *uta*, Japanese poetry—two principal games. One is *go*, properly called *gomoku narabe*, which, albeit played on the same board, and with the same counters or "men" as *goban*, is a very different game from the

childishly easy one hitherto known and played in this country. It is much more difficult and elaborate than chess, and admits of deeper and more complicated combinations. Everybody plays it, especially at the hot springs and bathing-places, and there are *go*-clubs and professors of the art and mystery of *go* in all the larger cities, while, what is more remarkable, blind players and teachers of remarkable skill may oftentimes be met with. Mr. Chamberlain has partially described the game, but it must be taught, and, being taught, would be a very valuable addition to the sedentary pleasures of English homes. He says:—

"*Go* was introduced into Japan from China by Shimomichi-no Mabi, commonly known as Kibi Daijin, who flourished during the reign of the Emperor Shômu (A.D. 724–756). In the middle of the seventh century a noted player called Honnimbô was summoned from Kyôto to entertain the Chinese Ambassador, then at the Court of the Shôgun, from which time forward special *go* players were always retained by the Shoguns of the Tokugawa dynasty.

"*Go* is played on a square wooden board. Nineteen straight lines crossing each other at right angles make three hundred and sixty-one *me*, or crosses, at the points of intersection. These may be occupied by a hundred and eighty white and a hundred and eighty-one black stones (*ishi*, as they are termed in Japanese). The object of the game is to obtain possession of the largest portion of the board. This is done by securing such positions

as can be most easily defended from the adversary's onslaughts. There are nine spots on the board, called *seimoku*, supposed to represent the chief celestial bodies, while the white and black stones represent day and night, and the number of crosses the three hundred and sixty degrees of latitude, exclusive of the central one, which is called *taikyoku*, that is, the Primordial Principle of the Universe. There are likewise nine degrees of proficiency in the game, beginning with number one as the lowest, and ending with number nine as the highest point of excellence attainable.

"In playing, if the combatants are equally matched, they take the white stones alternately; if unequal, the weaker always takes the black, and odds are also given by allowing him to occupy several or all of the nine spots or vantage-points on the board—that is, to place stones upon them at the outset. Very few foreigners have succeeded in getting beyond a rudimentary knowledge of this interesting game. Only one, a German named Korschelt, has taken out a diploma of proficiency. The easy Japanese game called *gobang*, which was introduced into England a few years ago, is played on the *go* board with the same *ishi*, and the only art here is to see who can first get five pieces into a row diagonal, vertical, or horizontal."

The other popular indoor-game of the Japanese is a card-game, called *hana-awase*, played everywhere, always, and by all classes. On any day, at any jinriksha-stand, you may see the *kurumaya-*

san squatted down, deep in the delight of *hana-awase*, the well-thumbed cards laid on the footboard of a "ricksha;" and just before I left Tôkyô a grave scandal arose, because a whole bench-full of judges had been caught playing this fascinating game with *geishas* at a tea-house. It is a really fine game, and deserves to be introduced among us as a quite possible rival of whist, skill and chance mingling in it as they do in that classic recreation of the middle-aged. *Hana-awase* means "the matching of flowers," and it is only lately that it has become universally popular in Japan, though probably far more ancient than any of our European card-games. The pack consists of forty-eight *karuta*, generally no larger than a visiting-card, having twelve suits of four cards each, these suits being named after various flowers, leaves, or trees, which are symbolical to the Japanese of the twelve months. The following list exhibits the suits and their symbolism, with the native names :—

Pine (*Matsu*)	January.
Plum (*Ume*)	February.
Cherry (*Sakura*)	March.
Wistaria (*Fuji*)	April.
Iris (*Negi*)	May.
Tree Peony (*Botan*)	June.
Lespedeza (*Hagi*)	July.
Eularia Japonica (*Tsuki, Bozu*)	August.
Chrysanthemum (*Kiku*)	September.
Maple (*Momiji*)	October.
Willow (*Shigure*)	November.
Paullownia (*Kiri*)	December.

Hana-awase is a card-game where the cleverest

sharper cannot cheat, because it is impossible to foresee the end. It is a game fuller of vicissitudes than poker or bézique, and repaying attention and calculation more than écarté or nap, while for the gambler its capabilities are as prodigiously ruinous as its chequered flow of good and bad luck is fascinating to the player for love. I shall, therefore, in hope of its ultimate acclimatisation among us, summarise below an account of the game, derived by the late General Palmer, of Tôkyô, from two accomplished players, Messrs. Yokoyama and Mori. Describing the cards the General says:—

"The method of decoration was representative of the twelve names of the suits, and might either be rudely printed or hand-painted, in which latter case cards may cost several *yen*. As a rule, the greater the face-value of any card the more elaborately was it decorated. The first in value were the four *shikomono*, or 'brilliants,' namely, the commanding cards of the *matsu*, *sakura*, *bozu*, and *kiri* suits. These were usually more highly decorated than the others, as, for instance, 'the blossoms in the Palace garden,' *gotenzakura*, the *kiri-no-oo*, and so on. The commanding card of the *shigure* suite, *o-ame*, was equal to a brilliant in counting the hand (that is, having the value of twenty chips of one point each), but had no other property of a brilliant. The commanding cards of the *ume*, *fuji*, *negi*, *botan*, *hagi*, *kiku*, and *momiji* suits, and the second cards of the *bozu* and *shigure* suits came next, having a value of ten points each, except for

the process of reckoning in *teyaku*, in which the *shigure* second card only counted one. These were called the *ike-mono*. Next came the *tanzakumono*, distinguished by having a coloured bar across the decoration to represent a strip of paper, which, with other cards, have a value of five points each; and lastly there came the *kasu-mono* (trash or refuse), twenty-four in number, consisting of the last two cards of the first ten suits, the fourth of the *shigure* and the second, third, and fourth of the *kiri*, which have a value of one point each."

The paper goes here into the difficult matter of counting the played cards. It says:—

"The peculiarity of the *shigure* hand was that while its cards, for counting the players' hands at the end of the game, reckoned respectively 20, 10, 5, and 1, they were only valued for the *teyaku* as *kasumono*, counting one each. The value of the 48 cards in all is 264, 3 times 88, or 22 times 12. As many as seven persons might sit down, but only three could come into the game at one time, and each player played his own game. The deal and the dealing went round from the right towards the left. The sitter on the dealer's left acted as 'pony,' and shuffled the spare pack for the next deal. In all, seven cards were dealt to each player, and six were placed on the table as banco. In the matter of declaring to play, a complicated system of forfeits was practised. If there were more than three players, say five, only three could play, and the third in order must wait till the two before him

had declared, and then negotiate with Nos. 4 and 5 with the view of buying them out, in which case they were exempt from forfeit. Coming now to the *teyaku*, each player must at the outset declare whether he held *teyaku*, that is, one of twelve specific combinations, in which each of the four cards of the *shigure* counted simply one, as *kasumono*. The object of the play was for each player to match as many cards as possible of the same suit, and to gain as many high-value cards as possible. *Dekiyaku* consists in the holding of the four Brilliants and the *o-ame*, or one of a limited number of other combinations. In counting the value of the cards for *hana-awase*, every point above 88 counts to a player's credit, and every point under to his debit. In each case the deal passes to the highest score in *hana-awase*, and twelve deals make the game. The counters are of two kinds, *kwanki* of twelve points each, and chips, value one point each."

Obviously these particulars can give only an outlined idea of *hana-awase*, but it is truly a first-class card-game, requiring good memory, good judgment, skill in calculating chances, and great readiness in counting, all being affected by the element of luck to about the same extent as Western card-games. Japanese who are most familiar with poker, declare that *hana-awase* surpasses it in its combination of skill and luck. An ingenious person who had learned the Japanese cards and way of counting, could very readily introduce the pastime here, substituting the rose, oak, snowdrop, violet, &c., for the

native names, and adapting the native representations.

Until recently all funerals in Japan were conducted by Buddhist priests, even those of Shinto dignitaries themselves; but now the Shintoists bury their own dead, in a coffin much like that used in Europe. The Buddhist "casket" is small and square, and the corpse is doubled up inside it, in a kneeling or squatting position, with the head bent down to the knees—some say in order that the dead man may repose in an attitude of prayer, others that he may take again, on being born into a new world, the folded-up form which he had before his mother gave him birth. Observe that, notwithstanding the Japanese reverence for ancestors, the man on the horse by the side of the procession does not lift his hat off as the dead body passes. It is not the custom in Japan to do this, because of the ingrained Buddhist idea that the earthly tenement is nothing, and the spirit—the *tamashi*—all; and yet that same man would not dream of speaking to an equal or superior without uncovering his head. One of the funny sights in Tôkyô is to see a countryman struggling with the strings of his big sun-hat, while he wants to talk ever so much, but cannot, to the friend or master whom he has just encountered.

Buddhism did good service throughout ancient and mediæval Japan in the matter of funeral observances, besides introducing to the Empire tea-drinking and other excellent novelties and noble doctrines. Formerly, as Mr. Chamberlain tells us in his "Things

Japanese," the horrid custom prevailed of burying the living with the dead. It is related that in the twenty-eighth year of the Emperor Suinin (B.C. 2 of the Christian chronology) his brother died. All his attendants were buried alive round the tumulus in a standing position. For many days they died not, but day and night wept and cried. The Mikado, hearing the sound of their weeping, was sad and sorry in his heart, and commanded all his ministers to devise some plan by which this custom, ancient though it was, should be discontinued for the future. Accordingly, when the Mikado died in A.D. 3, workers in clay were sent for to Izumo, who made images of men, horses, and various other things, which were set up round the grave instead of living beings. This precedent was followed in later times, and some of these figures still exist. The Ueno Museum in Tôkyô contains several specimens, and one (of a man) is now in the British Museum.

The vast tombs of the ancient Emperors and Daimios of Japan were called *misasagi*. The *misasagi* vary greatly in size. One measured by Mr. Satow in Kozuke was 36 feet in height, 372 feet long, and 284 feet broad. But this is a comparatively small one. That of the Emperor Ôjin, at Nara, measures 2312 yards in circumference, and is 60 feet high. Huge stones were reared inside them, and the industrious inhabitants were forced to labour unpaid to pile up the rude but costly burial-places. All this gave way before Buddhism. Mr. Chamberlain writes:—

"In the eyes of a Buddhist, vast costly structures were not only a burden to the people, but were objectionable as tending to foster false notions of the real value of these mortal frames of ours. Many of the Mikados were earnest devotees of Buddhism. Beginning with Gemmyô Tennô in A.D. 715, a long series of them abdicated the throne in order to spend the remainder of their lives in pious seclusion. In several cases, by their express desire, no *misasagi* were erected over their remains, and some even directed that their bodies should be cremated and the ashes scattered to the winds."

Cremation and burial are both practised in Japan, the former most extensively. A Japanese cemetery is full of narrow laths of wood, styled *sotoba*, set up round the very narrow grave of the deceased, and displaying his "death-name," which is quite different from that borne by him during life. The customs of the people are very graceful and tender as regards their dead. For fifty-nine days after the demise of a parent the children must set fresh flowers every day at the well-kept tomb, while afterwards frequent visits must be made. But all the dead of a household have their funeral tablets put up in front of the little family shrine inside the house, and every daybreak the inmates softly say their names with folded palms and heads bent down, and light a *senko* stick for each, so that its fragrant odour is the first thing in the morning which tells you that the Japanese household is up for the day.

The Japanese methods of taking ducks by decoy

do not greatly differ from the methods employed in Norfolk and our fen-regions, except that the Japanese never employ dogs. That is for want of the proper breeds, not for lack of skill in training, for the Japanese sportsmen and fishermen are most patient and adroit, as witness their extraordinary success in educating cormorants to catch fish. This, which always takes place at night, and by torchlight, is one of the strangest and most interesting forms of sport. It has been faithfully described by the late General Palmer, to whom I have previously been indebted in this article. The best place to see cormorant-fishing is on the river Nagara, near Gifu, in the province of Owari, and the system is thus explained :—

There are, to begin with, four men in each of the seven boats, one of whom, at the stern, has no duty but that of managing his craft. In the bow stands the master, distinguished by the peculiar hat of his rank, and handling no fewer than twelve trained birds with the surpassing skill and coolness that have earned for the sportsmen of Gifu their unrivalled pre-eminence. Amidships is another fisher, of the second grade, who handles four birds only. Between them is the fourth man, called *kako*, from the bamboo striking instrument of that name, with which he makes the clatter necessary for keeping the birds up to their work ; he also encourages them by shouts and cries, looks after spare apparatus, &c., and is ready to give aid if required. Each cormorant wears at the base of its neck a metal ring, drawn tight enough to prevent marketable fish from

passing below it, but at the same time loose enough —for it is never removed—to admit the smaller prey, which serve as food. Round the body is a cord, having attached to it at the middle of the back a short strip of stiffish whalebone, by which the great awkward bird may be conveniently lowered into the water or lifted out when at work; and to this whalebone is looped a thin rein of spruce fibre, twelve feet long, and so far wanting in pliancy as to minimise the chance of entanglement. When the fishing-ground is reached, the master lowers his twelve birds one by one into the stream, and gathers their reins into his left hand, manipulating the latter thereafter with his right as occasion requires. No. 2 does the same with his four birds; the *kako* starts in with his volleys of noise; and forthwith the cormorants set to at their work in the heartiest and jolliest way, diving and ducking with wonderful swiftness as the astonished fish come flocking towards the blaze of light. The master is now the busiest of men. He must handle his twelve strings so deftly that, let the birds dash hither and thither as they will, there shall be no impediment or fouling. He must have his eyes everywhere and his hands following his eyes. Specially must he watch for the moment when any of his flock is gorged—a fact generally made known by the bird itself, which then swims about in a foolish, helpless way, with its head and swollen neck erect. Thereupon the master, shortening in on that bird, lifts it aboard, forces its bill open with his left hand, which still holds the

rest of the lines, squeezes out the fish with his right, and starts the creature off on a fresh foray — all this with such admirable dexterity and quickness that the eleven birds still bustling about have scarce time to get things into a tangle, and in another moment the whole team is again perfectly in hand.

The cormorants are caught young, and very carefully educated. They become almost as humanly intelligent as their masters, and know exactly their distinguishing number, and the proper order in which they should enter the water. If cormorant No. 5 attempts to go in before cormorants Nos. 3 and 4, the chatter and squawking become terrific. The leader of the team is always an old grey bird, called *dai ichi*, and most jealous of his privileges. Some of these veterans have taken fish for their masters during periods of twelve and fifteen years, and truly comical it is to see them returning in the early morning, ranged on the gunwale of the boat, shaking their wet wings, preening their soaked feathers, flapping their tails, and stolidly digesting their share of the fish, with a running chorus of yelps and squawks, wanting nothing to seem like the blue-coated fishermen themselves, except a little brass *kiseru* smoking in their big beaks.

I must say something about those hard-working fellows, the *kuramaya-san*, or jinriksha-men. Without the ever-present aid of the class to which these belong, locomotion in Japan would be difficult or impossible. You begin by laughing at the ridiculous

vehicle which he draws, and end by almost living in the convenient little trundling-machine, which is seen everywhere now, in the remotest villages of the Empire as well as in its towns and cities. The "ricksha," as it has come to be called, is indeed spreading all over Asia. It forms the common conveyance to-day in Hong-Kong, Shanghai, Singapore, Penang, the Dutch colonies, the Indian hill-stations, and elsewhere, but will never come, I think, into European use, partly because of the white man's prejudice against turning draught-animal (albeit, he will pull a bath-chair at a walking pace), partly because of horse-traffic, which, in any excess, is fatal to the "ricksha." Yet this thoroughly acclimatised Japanese conveyance has only been in vogue for twenty years. It was invented in 1870 by an old gentleman of Kyôtô, who was paralysed, and went about in a little cart, or perambulator. Now there are over 60,000 of them in Tôkyô alone. The outfit of a jinriksha-man—coat, drawers, hat, lantern, all complete—is set down in the Tôkyô police regulations at five *yen*, about eleven shillings. His lawful rates for pulling you along at five or six miles an hour are from seven to fifteen cents, the Japanese *ri* equalling two and a half miles English. And on that modest twopence per mile the brave fellow will keep himself and his family, his average daily takings being about fifty cents.

A British cabman or labouring man or artisan will justly scorn such an ill-paid and patient life, but there is one point about the low-class Japanese

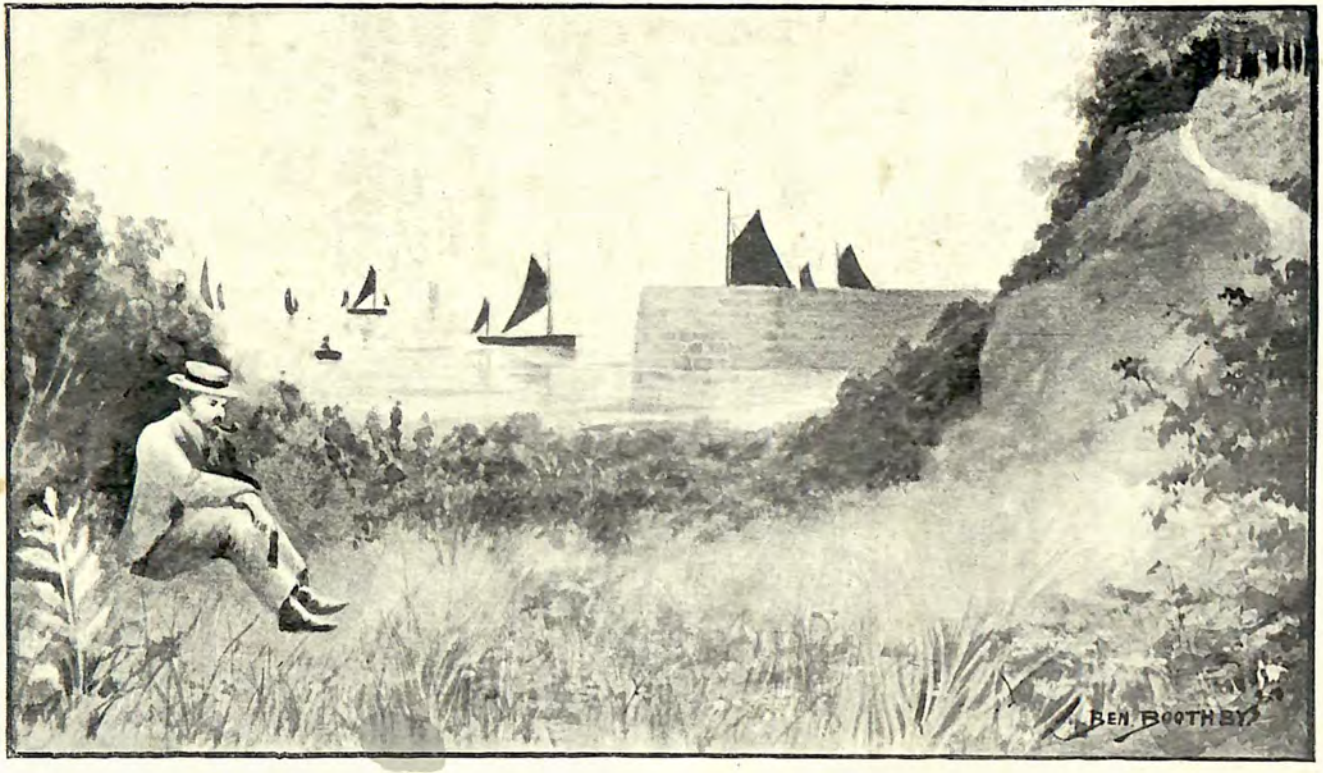
which might be profitably imitated in this country or in America. I mean the perfect and scrupulous cleanliness of the people—one and all, from the highest to the meanest. There are many enviable traits in the Japanese which we can never hope to introduce or imitate. We cannot import their delightful politeness, which renders existence a softer and pleasanter thing for all concerned. We cannot equal their deep respect for age and profound filial devotion, which make life quiet and easy for every parent, since he is sure to be maintained in honour and comfort by his sons, so that no one struggles to save, and every one looks forward to old age as the safest and sweetest period of his years. We cannot have their artistic perceptions of the simpler beauties of Nature, nor reach their perfect joy in a cherry-spray, a maple branch, a stream, or a seaside grove. We cannot live so refinedly or die so cheerfully as these children of the far past, whose religion is a fairy-book and whose social system resembles that of birds and butterflies. But, oh! we might be clean! I love and honour my countrymen and countrywomen of the working and middle classes beyond words, and think them, what they think themselves, the chief of all races—but, as a people, do they habitually wash? Will anybody be bold enough to say that the average tradesman, or artisan, or handicraftsman, or labourer, or railway man, or cabman in England, always or often, or, in many cases, so much as even sometimes, bathes after his day's labour? Do they even invariably wash their mouths and hands before kissing

the mistress and children and sitting down to meals? Alas! we know that they do not, and, with the miserable provision made for them in their houses and towns and villages, that practically they cannot. But these Japanese—men, women, and children—would rather go without their food than without their tub. They could not, and would not, sit down at home with dirty fingers or unwashed feet. A rickshaman's hands or a maid-servant's hands are just as beautifully kept in Japan as a Minister's or a Court lady's. The feet of the people are fair and sweet and symmetrical to behold, and in a crowd they have no odour because of their superlative purity of skin. If we suddenly saw bare all the feet and limbs of our working people—ay, or of many among their betters—what would they look like in the way of personal neatness and propriety? Ask the hospital surgeons and the attendants at our workhouses! But you could not strip the humble dress from the poorest in Japan and fail to find his skin clean, his hands and feet trimly kept, his person proudly pure. It is not due to the climate, for Japanese winters and springs are as cold and damp as ours. It is due to the noble and elevating love of cleanliness for its own sake; and I wish with all my heart I could make England Japanese in this one point. Hard work never spoiled a housemaid's honest hands if gloves were worn and proper care were taken of them, and with clean feet and limbs a man can do as much toil as the one who goes like a pig. In Tôkyô alone there must be 2000 public baths where adults can bathe for a

halfpenny and children for a farthing. It is true they use the same big tub and the same water, but then the real washing is performed outside the great *oke*, with little tubs, and the bodies of the bathers are kept so clean that a dip in the general water does not soil it. It is a medical fact that the Japanese escape typhus and many forms of European maladies by their semi-divine cleanliness—which is part of the self-respect characteristic of this gentle and gifted people—so that if I had the power, and might offer to my country one precious and universal gift from the "Land of the Rising Sun," it should be the Japanese warm bath-tub, at a halfpenny a head, universally accessible out-of-doors or indoors.

X

AND NOT ASHAMED



"NEAR THE LITTLE QUAY WHERE THE TRAWLERS LAY." *P.* 211.

X

AND NOT ASHAMED

It all happened in a village of the West Coast which I used to know, and to haunt: and I heard it from an old coastguardsman, as I sate in the hollow of the red cliffs near to the little quay where the trawlers lie. I had been reading a noble passage of Mr. Ruskin's "Modern Painters," which I will hunt up and quote, because then, whoever peruses these lines, whether they like my story or not, will be sure to get something worth their trouble.

The passage was that in Part III., sec. 1, ch. xv., of "Modern Painters," and it was good and pleasant to read such wholesome words in the placid hollow of the cliff, with the Channel Sea rippling underfoot, beyond the furze and blackberry bushes, in curves of green and silver, with the goldfinches flitting among the thistles, the larks carolling overhead, and the gulls flying hither and thither, more for pure delight in the power of their wings than for any hunger. Wrote Mr. Ruskin:

"It is not possible for a Christian man to walk across so much as a rood of the natural earth, with mind unagitated and rightly poised, without receiving strength and hope from some stone, flower, or

leaf, or sound; nor without a sense of bliss falling upon him out of the sky. And if it be not always so, that is partly the fault of even holy men, who in the recommending the love of God to us refer but seldom to those things in which it is most abundantly and immediately shown. Though they insist much on His giving of bread and raiment and health (which He gives also to the inferior creatures), they do not require us sufficiently to thank Him for that glory of His works which He has permitted us alone to perceive. They bid us often meditate in the closet, but send us not enough into the fields at evening. They dwell on the duty of self-denial, but they do not half enough inculcate the duty of delight. No doubt many an earnest mind has often little time or disposition to heed anything more than the mere toil and obligations of life; but I think that of the weaknesses, distresses, vanities, schisms, and sins which ofttimes in the best men diminish their usefulness and mar their happiness, there would be fewer if, in their struggle with Nature fallen, they sought for more aid from Nature undestroyed. It seems to me that the real sources of bluntness in men's feelings towards the splendour of the grass and the glory of the flowers are less to be found in ardour of occupation, seriousness of philanthropy, or heavenliness of desire than in the turning of the eye at intervals of rest too seriously within; the want of courage to shake off anxieties and leave the way of the world to Him that rules it. . . . I believe the root of almost every failure Christian

teachers make has been the effort to force men to earn rather than to receive their salvation . . . and to call on men oftener to work for God—who needs it not—than to stand by and see God working for them."

The same high idea is to be found in the poetry of the Sufis. Their subtle and melodious Persian bard sings—as I have transcribed him in my "Sàdi in the Garden"—about

> *Ma'arifat*, the State divine,
> Where the Soul dwells in light beyond this light,
> Nor sees alone *Jalâl*, Greatness of God,
> But *Jamâl*, Beauty, Grace, and Joy of God,
> For which dear splendour we desire Him most,
> Not for His terrors nor His majesties,
> And so doth Sàdi inculcate in song.

It was the right place to sit in and to realise the meanings both of the British prose-poet and of the Persian mystic, while admiring how Nature had led them both to the same great and comfortable doctrine. The cliffs, ruddy as blood with the old red sandstone of which they were built—made a natural amphitheatre of peace and beauty, whose far vast stage was the Channel, upon which went and came the "peoples of the sea." Veronicas with wild roses and the golden sprays of the gorse adorned its clefts and ledges; while families of rock-pigeons, living in the recesses of the cliff, filled the air with pretty noises of love and bird business, which mingled with softened sounds of boat-building and of human doings from the village lying just beyond the headland. A narrow and steep path wound along the

mid-way bosom of the hollow, down which I presently perceived an old friend of mine (the coastguardsman) approaching, his telescope under his arm, and handling an empty pipe. Sitting down beside me, and borrowing my tobacco-pouch, he cut my philosophising short, just as I drop it here; but something which he told me then and there about that particular spot of the coast has made me always remember the scene, and the page in Ruskin, and the thought that it is good to be natural, and to get from Nature those lessons of simplicity, and trust, and truth which she can impart.

He began out of a little incident which occurred while we sat there together. A good-looking young woman, with a pretty boy toddling by her side, came down the path, carrying a heavy basket—for it was a short cut to the village—and the grey-headed sailor and I helped her with her load over a difficult bit of the descent. I noticed she had a face so comely and frank as to compel observation, and was struck by the honest directness of her glance and the fearless look of her beautiful grey eyes.

"Nothing contraband in that big basket, Mrs. James, I hopes," said the old Bluejacket, making a semi-official joke.

"La! Mr. Brown," says the handsome young matron, "just look for yourself;" and with that she threw back the napkin from a whole poultry-yard of chickens and eggs which she was carrying to the little shop where she sold such commodities, and

where her husband kept the post-office, and dealt in stationery and dry goods.

"'Taint the first time, Mary, be it, as I've had to have my eye on you here?" said the coast-guardsman, with a kindly softening of his seafaring tones.

I couldn't imagine why the rich blood should leap as it did into those pretty cheeks. I should have thought—merely from passing her now and then, and exchanging a few friendly words—that she was too composed, and happy, and self-satisfied a wife and mother ever to have any need or power to blush. But the wild roses that her skirts brushed against, as she shook her head archly at the old sailor and passed away down the path, were pale in their warmest crimson compared to the burning glow which went over her cheeks and brow; and down, indeed, to her neck and bosom.

"Why, Brown!" I said, "you have managed to set that handsome Mrs. James's face on fire with a word! What did it mean?"

"It don't mean anything agin the goodness and the sweetness of her, sir! You may take your davy about that. A better and a truer woman don't walk these parts. But it do mean something out of the common that happened in this wery spot and to that wery Mary James, and what might, p'raps, have been ever so much worse than it turned out, except for the chance of my keeping my weather-eye lifted that day."

And then my marine friend—salted down into

sagacity and kindliness by many a hard but useful year of life—told me the little story which sticks in my recollection along with that nook in the sandstone cliff, that passage in Mr. Ruskin, and the reflections they started about town life and country life. I must take leave to translate him out of the Devon vernacular in at least the greater portion of it.

"You've seen James, sir," he began, "him what keeps the post-office; and you've seen what a quiet, proud, self-respecting sort of young man he is. He was always the same, and no honester don't live, and no uprighter; but the silent ways of him was nigh to costing him Mary yonder." Whereupon he narrated to me in his own style, and with many an intercalated cloud of smoke, how Mary was the daughter of a farmer—a widower—in a neighbouring inland hamlet, and how she grew up the prettiest little maid of the district from her childhood; and how, out of many admirers, the one she secretly liked most—almost without her own knowledge—was this same John James, who was son of the owner of a trawling vessel, a good-looking fellow and excellent sailor, but shy and reserved. The one she liked least—with very full consciousness of her reasons, for he was a noisy, selfish, self-willed person, rich as people are reckoned in those parts, and well-built, and rather finely-featured, but given to drink, and otherwise objectionable—was the lawyer of the market-town, named George Barker. And to understand the matter rightly, he must

give me to know that James had never spoken, nor never dared or dreamed to speak, one word to Mary about the love of which his heart was full, and had only once, indeed, gone so far as to ask her, at a dance, for a yellow rosebud which was in her hair. George Barker, on the other hand, was always persecuting her with his undesired attentions, and saying bitter and bad things about everybody else who ventured to cast an eye in her direction, trying in every possible manner to worry her into marrying him. John, who knew a good deal that had been shameful about George Barker's life, was far too honest a fellow to speak against him behind his back; and this was the state of things when a bad season came and Mary's father made lee-way in his farming accounts and got behindhand, and had to borrow money by bills at heavy interest; until at last the prospect was that he would end by losing his farm for a matter of £200, where his father and grandfather had lived before him. This came to be known to most of the neighbours, and to John James and George Barker among those; and the two of them, each for himself, took characteristic resolutions. John, who had never ventured to speak to Mary while she was reputed rich, was inclined to do so now that her father had no money and might be ruined. But what he determined upon was to sell his share in the trawler, realising about one hundred pounds, and go to sea in a pilot-cutter, where the pay for a mate is fairly good, saving every penny of his

wages, until he could put it to the £100, and offer it all to Mary's father before the crisis ripened. Barker, on the contrary, who had money and to spare, secretly bought up whatever bills he could lay hands upon, signed by Mary's father, and prepared a *coup*. He went to the old gentleman and demanded his daughter, acquainting him with the fact that, holding most of the bills, he meant to sell him up if Mary was refused to him, or to burn them the day she became Mrs. Barker. There was a painful scene afterwards at the farm-house. Mary, who was a dutiful child devoted to her father, was informed of the alternative, and with her heart hankering after John, doubted sorely whether it was not, after all, love lost, because of his silence. She could not, however, bear to think of her father bankrupt, outcast, perhaps in prison. George might turn out better than he promised—he must have some regard and respect for her to be ready to tear up £200 in bills for the sake of her hand. She would marry him—if it must be; and the old coastguardsman hit his pipe so hard upon the bench when he told me this, that the bowl flew off.

That same day, he said, John had put £135 into the bank towards buying off Mary's father from his creditors; and was walking home by the beach full of gentle pride and hope. Mary had been to the village to sell chickens and eggs and butter—and was coming the other way, in a very mournful mood, by this same upper path. "And as it hap-

pened," said the old sailor, "I was on duty at the top of the cliff, a-carrying this wery glass. And what did happen, sir, was most rum," whereupon he proceeded to recount a certainly remarkable episode. John James, it appears, was a wonderfully clever swimmer, and fond to excess of a sea-bath. The little bay being free of people, the afternoon divine, and the green water bright and laughing enough to tempt a tired mermaid, he stripped, and plunged in from the rocks. After a half-hour in the waves he was climbing back to the ledge where he had placed his clothes when that occurred which often befalls along these Devonian cliffs—a slight landslip. A ton or two of rock, detached by the summer rain, rattled down, and one fair-sized fragment caught the unfortunate John on the side of the head and laid him senseless, half in and half out of the water. "It was just in that nook down there, sir! which you can spy from this seat; and if you'll look up you'll see the clift is a fresher red right above us than along the rest of the brow."

At that moment Mary was slowly pacing down the path, wrapt in miserable reflections; having the day before given herself away, also having that very day learned in the village that John had signed articles to cruise in the pilot-cutter *Good Hope*, which looked as if he never had cared for her, and cared less than ever now, since her father was on the point of bankruptcy. "Now, sir," said Brown, "what I tells you now is what I

seed with this here glass, though not till it was half over." Arrived at the place where the bench is planted, she suddenly observes something pink, something unmistakably unusual, at the foot of the rocks. It is half in the wash of the waves, half leaning against the seaweeds and stones. Ah! it is a man, a drowned sailor! She must approach —she must examine—if possible, if there be any life, she must help! Sturdy and healthy as one of her father's heifers, it is nothing to her to scramble down the steep face of the slope and to reach the body. At the last few steps she passes a heap of clothes upon a stone, and recognises the pattern of the neck-handkerchief lying upon the pilot-jacket; recognises the silver cable-chain in the waistcoat! It is the man she secretly loves! It is John James! One glance at the pallid face, down which a thin thread of crimson blood trickles, confirms what the clothes have told her; and—country girl, sea-coast girl, as she is—all is quite clear to her in an instant. He has been bathing under the cliffs, a stone has fallen and struck him; he may not be—he need not be—dead! Before her maidenly eyes he lies, who was too shy to tell her that he loved her, and, "I allow," says old Brown, "there's plenty of fine London misses who would have fainted or screamed, or called for salts or somethink, with that to look on." But being as pure as rain, and as simple as sunshine, and as natural as the flowers, Mary bends over her lover very tenderly, and feels for his heart. It

beats! it beats! and—oh, token of truth stripped bare!—right over it, on the white skin, is tattooed, as sailors use, the word "MARY." Moreover,

"SHE SUDDENLY OBSERVED SOMETHING PINK AT THE FOOT OF THE ROCKS."

hung about his neck in a length of white sennet is a little silk bag. Being daughter of Eve, she

must look—she does look, into that bag. It is only a tiny string to pull, and inside—"La!" there is the yellow rosebud he begged from her hair at the dance; faded, and soaked by the waves, but, oh! the rosebud! Now, for twenty times better reason than mere humanity, must she show herself heroic. If John James lies here many minutes longer, the incoming tide will choke and kill him; nor is there any help to be had except what she can give. "You'll understand," says Brown, "that it's only just after this p'int that I comes into the play; for I hadn't clapped eyes yet upon what was going on below." She bends down over the swooning man, and, placing her great shapely arms under his, and getting his helpless chin upon her shoulder, heaved his body up with the majestic power resident in the loins of country-bred English girls; and clasping him tenderly but firmly, mounted the stones, step by step, until she could lay him on a place of safety amidst the grass and sea-poppies. Then, woman-like, the danger being gloriously conjured, she succumbed, and broke into tears and weakness—having just force enough remaining to fetch John's coat and shirt from the rocks below, and dispose them over her strangely-confessed sweetheart. "'Twas so I saw her, sir," Brown went on, "sobbing and laughing by turns by the side of the man that loved her; and, at the first, I allow, I didn't understand it. But when all was made clear, and we wiped the blood away and see him coming to, I says, 'You're a

right good girl, Mary!' I says, 'a rare good brave girl! and, as this young chap's getting round, you run off home, and don't say nuthen to nobody, no more won't I; then no one won't ever be able to arst about it—not even John himself.'"

Her face, he said, became red again like a cliff-poppy, when this counsel was being given. But she took it gladly, and went off, leaving Mr. Brown to bring John to, and to take the business on himself, which he did. As to the advice of absolute silence, she did not quite follow that, insomuch as, full of her new and tender secret, she told her father that night that he must ask her no questions, but that it was quite impossible she could ever marry George Barker. Which piece of sudden news made the old gentleman deeply perplexed, and George savagely angry and jealous.

Afterwards, to make up the money wherewith he intended to aid Mary's father, John—recovered, and unaware of his rescuer—went off in the pilot-cutter, and was away for a fortnight or more, during which time a violent summer storm burst upon the coast. He went off in his proud, silent way, with only just a hand-shake of farewell to his beautiful love, never dreaming that those quiet, limpid eyes had read the inscription above his manly heart, and that Mary had borne him, stark naked, in her faithful, fond arms, like a baby. Men are such fools, for the most part! The interval was a troubled one up at the farmhouse, because George Barker went there again and again to plague Mary and to threaten the old gentleman,

whose bills were soon falling due. Then the bad weather came, and one afternoon—when the worst had blown over, but still no boat could as yet put out, and the villagers were gathered on the sea-front looking to windward, as coast-folk will, for the waters to bring their own tidings—presently they spy some wreckage coming in, and then, outside, a boat, bottom upwards, and, outside that again, what the look-out man allowed to be a corpse driving. All this quickly spread into the countryside, and brought everybody down to the shore; nor was the excitement small when the swamped boat rolled into reach, and was found to have *Good Hope* painted on the stern. Had the pilot-cutter gone down, then, and would the poor human flotsam and jetsam prove to be some one they all knew—John James, perhaps?

It came ashore, bare to the waist, sorely disfigured by the fish and the waves, so that the features were wholly indistinguishable. It came ashore, and was reverently laid on the shingle, amid a crowd containing Mr. Brown, George Barker, Mary, and a hundred others, among whom the rumour ran—no doubt because of the dark hair and strong frame—that it was indeed John. And poor Mary, seemingly, for just one agonised moment, thought so too; since, obeying an emotion entirely irresistible, she sprang forward, knelt by the sad relic, and, laying open the chest of the corpse, exclaimed, "Ah, dear God! no; it's not John! there's no mark upon his bosom!"

I had lent the coastguardsman my pipe, well filled,

but—at this point—he let it go completely out, so absorbed was he in finishing his story; which he did in the following words, as well as I can recall them:

"They was all, sir, pretty much startled-like to see Mary do such a thing as this—all 'cepting me, that is to say, because, in course, I wery well understood. But it might have gone off quiet, and only have made gossip, hadn't it been for that man Barker, who, with the ugliest face you ever see, burning alive with disappointment and spitfire jealousy, breaks out, before everybody, at Mary, saying, 'What do *you* know, that you *ought* to know about the marks on John James's bosom—you——?' Sir, he never got the evil word more than half-way out before he was clouted on the mouth with three or four rough sleeves at once, for Mary was the favourite of the village; and while they was half for ducking him and half for letting him go, I sings out, 'Hold that 'ere gentleman fast, lads, till I clears this fog up,' and then and there I says the whole story over to 'em all, and how Mary come to know what was wrote upon John's bosom, and the courage and goodness of the girl."

"They thought more of her than ever, didn't they?" I asked.

"Lord, sir, they'd have give her the moon out of the sky if they could, so proud they was of her, and pleased. But it's a rum thing, too, what happened soon afterwards."

"What was that?"

"Why, a message came from John, saying he was all alive and jolly, and he and his mates, after losing a boat and having a poor fellow washed overboard, had done a very pretty piece of salvage in the Channel-mouth with their pilot-cutter, helping a treasure-ship into Plymouth, which was going to be worth to them more than a hundred pounds a man."

"Well, Brown," I said, "I can guess the rest, as if it was written out on the log-slate."

"Don't doubt you can, sir," responded the old sailor, demurely lighting his pipe—my pipe rather—anew. "John came home, and paid the old man clear, and flew where he had been before, without knowing it—into Mary's arms—and there was a wedding and grand doings, and you may judge it's five or six years ago by the size of yon little toddler that went down the path with Mrs. James just now. She won't let John go to sea any more, if she can help it, and there ain't no need, for the Squire got him the post-office, and that salvage job turned up trumps to the tune, I'm told, of four hundred pounds."

"And George Barker?" I inquired.

"Oh, George! oh, he cleared out. We didn't want him any more, and he didn't want us."

XI

A LUCKY NEWSPAPER

"IN JIBING, THE BOOM KNOCKED THE SKIPPER OVERBOARD." *P.* 229.

XI

A LUCKY NEWSPAPER

In beautiful old-time May weather those butterflies of the sea, the yachts of our pleasure-navy, began their season this year, and all lovers of the noble pastime were glad that the Prince of Wales, with his splendid new cutter, the *Britannia*, carried off two first prizes in the earliest matches of the spring from such antagonists as Mr. P. Donaldson's *Calluna*, Lord Dunraven's *Valkyrie*, and the out-classed *Iverna*. Mr. A. D. Clarke's cutter *Satanita*, while stretching her fresh canvas on the Solent, had sprung her boom, and could not take part in these contests, which were otherwise in many respects so memorable. To what perfection has not the art of shipbuilding for pastime been brought, when we can see two such exquisitely-modelled craft as the *Britannia* and the new *Valkyrie* reach and run all the way from Gravesend to the Mouse Light and back, and again from the Nore to the Goodwins and Dover, and scarcely ever from first to last have more than a ship's length or two of distance between them!

I was myself afloat in my own vessel, the *Harelda*, a yawl of 80 tons, in the delicious weather of that opening week, and cruising over those same waters

where the matches were sailed, that is to say, at and beyond the Mouse Light and North Foreland. How little do those ashore who are unacquainted with the estuary of the London river understand what is implied by such a spot and beacon as the Mouse Light. To the eye of one who simply inspects a small-scale map, or passes in a passenger-ship down the river, and out at its mouth, in this or that direction, for foreign travel, those outer waters where the two estuaries of Thames and Medway melt into ocean seem to be merely one equal and simple expanse. But, in reality, they constitute such a labyrinth as might have puzzled the Minotaur. From Orford Ness on the northern coast, southwards, right across to the North Foreland, that watery waste which the two rivers make is a perfect maze of sands and shoals, of knolls, oozes, and shifting shingle, which guards the royal river and the imperial city better than the best fortifications and strongest war-ships. If in time of conflict with an alliance of formidable naval enemies, we could afford to remove, and did remove, the buoys, beacons, and lightships from all those intricate passages that lead through and along the tangle of shallows, no foeman in his senses would dream of bringing a heavy squadron to bombard Sheerness, Gravesend, or Greenwich, letting alone the forts that fringe the river. Or, if any one had the desperate courage to make such an attempt and succeeded in it, that could only be by the assistance of some thoroughly qualified English Channel pilot, supposing such a traitor were to be found. There are, no doubt,

men, and even plenty of men, salted down by sea business from their youth, and conversant a thousand times over, in every sort of weather, with that marvellous network of deadly dangers, who, asking nothing but the deep-sea lead in their hand and a trustworthy compass, could bring the largest vessels through the baffling intricacies of South Channel or Queen's Channel; the Knock Deep, or the Black Deep, or the Barrow Deep; the Sledway, or the Shipway; going clear of the Inner and Outer Gabbard and the Galloper and the Kentish Knock and Alborough Flats, the Tongue, the Shingles, the Girdler, the Knock John, the North Knob, the Middle Sunk, the Shipwash, Buxey, Columbine, and Cant; to say nothing of the outlying and ever-dreaded Goodwins, the South Falls, and Sandettie. These are only some few of the titles given to that wilderness of wild water and hidden land which constitutes so formidable a defence for the mouth of our principal river. But we dare not ever use them as a defence. To remove the buoys and beacons, planted by the hundred in this maritime maze, would be to render the Thames impenetrable to our own commercial fleet, and to all the innumerable small peoples of the sea—smacks, schooners, brigs, barges, and borleys, which come and go at the mouth of Father Thames. The consequence is, that those endlessly involved water-roads, with all their turns and windings, have to be learned by heart, not only by those who follow the profession of pilots, but by the fishermen, yachtsmen, and others who frequent them. The knowledge dis-

played by London cabmen of the names and localities of metropolitan squares and streets is very often remarkable; but it comes to nothing as an effort of automatic memory and proof of the bump of locality, compared with what a really experienced and qualified navigator will carry in his head about such an estuary as that in which the yacht races of last month were held. The streets—for all their intricacy—are ever at the same level and of the same width; but the rise and fall of the tides in those waters alter all their aspect and character, so that for the pilot, who has been compared to the cabman, there are two or three or four salt-water Londons to learn by heart. There is Thames Mouth at high tide, when the flat-bottomed barges and vessels of small draught go gaily over almost everything, and the broad sea-ways are brimming full, and free and plain even to the ships of heavy burden. Then there is the low-water Thames Mouth, when half-a-hundred important gateways are quite shut by some narrow but dangerous ridge of sand which dries nearly bare, and upon which in bad weather the sea breaks and thunders as if it were a Pacific coral-reef. Then there is the Thames Mouth at half-ebb or half-flood, most deadly of all, because of the currents and eddies of the in or out running tide, which will often lift an incautious navigator upon the brink of a sandbank, rising abruptly like a railway embankment from water six or seven fathoms deep. In winter-time and wild seasons nothing can be more mortally perilous than the position of vessels caught,

like flies, in the spider's web of these treacherous under-water puzzles. If they go aground when heavy seas are running, she must be a stout ship that does not quickly bump in her bilge, and crack and shatter her timbers with the repeated shock of her blows upon the hard knoll. And if the weather be fine, she is often left by a spring tide so high that nothing the crew can do will get her off. There is a class of men called Hovellers, of whom many live in and near Harwich, whose business in winter, when there is no yachting or other light work, consists in going out in powerful rough-built cutters to salvage, where they can, all sorts of craft caught upon the banks and shoals of the Thames. They live in constant familiarity with deadly danger, and earn an occasional windfall by many a narrow escape and hardship almost unimaginable to the landsman. I have heard one of them say that the stoutest mariner afloat, who has been through every ordeal that the sea could inflict upon the human spirit and the human stomach, cannot long withstand the terrible sensation of standing upon the deck of a stranded ship when the sands below, with awful shock following upon shock, are beating the masts out of her like loose teeth from a broken garden-rake.

Immense ingenuity has been devoted by those in authority to the duty of elucidating the marine puzzles which such a coast offers; but to learn to read the sea-signs of the Trinity House is almost as long and difficult a study as that of a new language.

The accomplished steersman must know why the buoys on one hand are conical, and those on the other flat-topped; and what their colours mean, when they are painted white, or black, or green, or red, or striped vertically, or striped horizontally, or surmounted by a staff, a ball, a cage, or a bell. Notable among recent improvements are the large, ever-burning, automatically-supplied gas-buoys, from time to time carefully filled with gas at high pressure, which constantly burns in a well-guarded lamp. By day, an experienced mariner of such an estuary picks his way from buoy to buoy—if it be clear weather—as easily as a cabman taking the right turnings in town. By night, a succession of these floating lamps and heedfully-planted lighthouses leads him with reasonable safety through the intricacies of the place. But if the sky be thick, by day or by night, it is to the lead that he must chiefly trust. Nor is there any monument of faithful human service, to my mind, more striking and more illustrative of how man may help man by true discharge of daily duty than the figures on the coasting-charts, which hereabouts, and in a thousand other localities, register the painstaking and accurate soundings made by maritime surveyors. All over such an area as this deadly expanse of sea-traps and tidal perils every spot on the huge map will be marked with figures faithfully representing the exact depth of water at low tide. If, therefore, you only know how to read intelligently the otherwise bewildering multitude of marks, you can hardly take three or four consecutive

casts of the hand-lead without knowing to a nicety where your ship is situated. A special danger, however, arises from the fact that these sands and mazes are perpetually shifting their position, closing up old passages and opening new ones. Eighteen years ago I well remember sailing in a little cutter which I then owned through the Spitway, that leads between the Buxey and the Gunfleet Sands, out of the Wallet into East Swin. Then, at low water, we had fifteen feet at that spot, and came through carelessly; while only last week I sailed the *Harelda* through the same difficult gut within an hour of flood, and for a dozen casts in succession the utmost that the leadsman got was "quarter less three," so that, at the end of the ebb, there would not be five feet of water in that passage now.

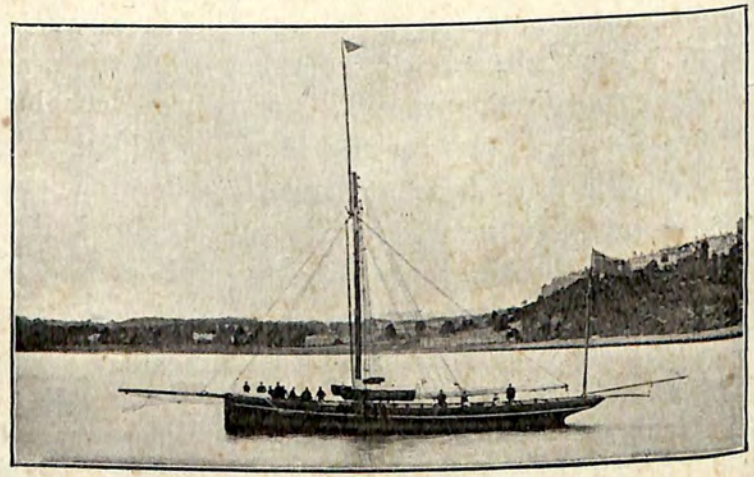
Desolate beyond expression in the winter months are these winding water-paths and coasting-lanes by which the commerce of the world feels its way into the river. Weird and uncanny to any except the surest navigator in the strongest ship is it to hear through the fog or the pitch-black darkness those particular buoys that are armed with a heavy bell, against the sides of which the rolling of the sea sets four or five ponderous hammers for ever banging. Melancholy in the mid November or December—beyond the scream of the seagull, the whistle of the wind, and the seething of the seawaves, is that dirge-like note always pealing from the edge of the sand or shallow where cold Death sits waiting for the imprudent crew. Nor is there one of these bells

which has not in its time tolled the funeral-knell of some hapless ship's company. But in the summer weather all is different. The breeze, if it blows fresh, seems to have no spite in it; the waves, if they roll free, appear to be at play, like the pleasure-craft that dance over them with their white sails and glittering topsides and dainty rigging. It is fun and not danger to scud or beat from mark to mark and down the winding water-lanes of green and silver; though only by some such hard winter experience can any just sense be had of the wonderful skill of our coastmen and mariners, and of the excellent work done all round our perilous shores by the Admiralty and the Elder Brethren.

The Mouse Light — so gallantly rounded on Thursday and Saturday, the 25th and 27th, by the Prince of Wales's beautiful ship, the *Britannia*, and her consorts—is a point not very far advanced into that complicated Thames labyrinth. You run down to it from the Nore through the Warp and the West Swin with great facility, so that it makes an excellent goal for a river-yacht race; and all the coasters coming up from the North and the East reach it by a road which landsmen could never find—along the Shipway, the King's Channel, and the Middle Deep —yet one that is as plain to mariners as Piccadilly to Londoners. It was a pretty sight to see the fleet of grand new cutters sweep round the red markship, of which I for one must always retain a special recollection because of what I saw happen there once, when a lady's kindly thought, and a copy of the

Daily Telegraph, between them saved the life of a man. On the occasion in question, now many years ago, I was on board a club-steamer watching such a match as that of last week. The yachts had one by one approached the Mouse Light, and I had happened to mention to a lady on board how lonely was the life of the lightkeepers, and what an event for them would be even the temporary excitement of the passage of the yachts and excursion steamers. "I wish I could send them my newspaper," she said; "there is something in it so very interesting!" and upon that offer, starting with her own copy of the *Daily Telegraph*, we collected a whole sheaf of newspapers and magazines from the passengers, and, waving one of them, hailed the lightship to send a boat for the bundle of literature. It was fine quiet weather, and they were glad to do this—just before the yachts rounded the Light. The last of the competing pleasure-craft—a powerful cutter—steered by a famous yacht-captain, was just turning to run home, when, in jibing, the boom knocked the skipper overboard. He could swim, but badly, if at all, in his heavy pea-jacket. His own vessel had shot far ahead before she could come to the wind and lower a boat, and all the other yachts in the race were well out of the range of rescue. But by the good fortune of that gentle lady who had hit upon the idea of sending her paper to the Lightship men, there was their boat just halfway back to the Mouse ship, in exactly the proper place upon the water; and it only cost two or three

strokes of her oars to come to the spot where the poor skipper was sinking, and pull him into the boat with nothing worse than a ducking and a scare. And so it was, according to the heading of this paper—that a "lucky newspaper" saved the life of a man.



THE "HARELDA."

XII

THE TIGER'S VILLAGE

"LIES A CORPSE UNDER HIS CLAWS." P. 241.

XII

THE TIGER'S VILLAGE

"*Ghora ki badli karna hoga?*"—"Do we change horses here?"

"Nay! it is only a miserable village, Protector of the Poor! where we may stay a little to buy milk and get fodder for the cattle."

This conversation took place between an English Sahib and his servant towards evening upon a country-road in the Deccan, that wide tableland of the Bombay Presidency which was called in old times "Maharâshtra." The particular spot was on a jungle-path passing from Sattara along the lower slopes of the Ghâts, where they rise towards the fashionable hill-station of Mahabuleshwar. The country thereabouts is very pleasant to see, and to travel through, in the right season. Dense masses of dark-green foliage cover the rolling hills, which have a soil of rich red clay, contrasting well with the clumps of sâl and tamarind trees and the thickets of corinda. The vegetation is not tropical—at least, to the hasty observer; there are no palms or bananas, that is to say, and not many bamboo groves upon the uplands I am recalling to mind. An ordinary English bracken flourishes freely upon the bare rounded

elevations which here and there rise among the more thickly-wooded heights, and the pansy and balsam, the lupin and marigold, will be perceived in the jungle, along with all sorts of flowers more strange to the European eye, the white and deadly datura, the wild indigo, the coral-lily, and delicate parasites festooning the trunks and branches of the forest-trees, some of them of singular loveliness and variety of form and colour. Although not far removed from main and well-frequented roads, this jungle-country of the Western Ghâts is as wild and sequestered in many parts as the heart of a wilderness. From the lonely pools that lie at the foot of the hills the Indian plover rises, as you pass, with its strange cry which sounds like "Did you do it? Did you do it?" Now and again a family of monkeys, the grey Hanumans, will cross the forest path, the old man of the four-handed household angrily chattering at the sight of strangers, while the child-monkeys jump upon the backs or breasts of their hairy mothers, where they will nestle quite securely while she jumps down a precipice or up into the fork of a tree. In the sandy patches you may come upon a mongoose or a porcupine, or see that strange beast the *paradoxurus*—"ood," as the Mahrattas call it—stealthily grubbing about the cactus clumps for rats or snakes. The button-quail and rain-quail start from almost every tuft with sharp whirr of their little mottled wings, as if they were cricket-balls exploding; and the jungle-dove, cream-coloured with jewelled neck, coos soft love-notes in every

milk-bush. You will sight no black buck in these uplands, but, possibly enough, you may start a ravine-deer, and perhaps a sambar or *barasingh*. Yet the underwood conceals many other and fiercer animals, some of which are the real lords of the manor hereabouts. The bison roams the neighbouring hills, and the bear is a permanent tenant of them; wild cats and leopards live in many a hidden cavern of the rocks; while at night you will not pitch your tents in any region of the district without knowing by their cries that the hyenas reside there, and the red hill-fox, and as a matter of course the jackal. But the true owner and landlord of many a tract of country in the parts I am revisiting in thought is that gold-coated and dark-striped tyrant of the woods, the tiger. There are large ranges on the ghauts—one might almost call them estates—which are owned, at least temporarily, by a pair of tigers, or, it may be, by an old male tiger singly, or by a tigress which has been left alone to take care of herself and her cubs, and so develops all the worst virtues of her fierce maternity. It is one of these last that has come to my mind in connection with a summer evening in India, when along the lonely jungle-road the Englishman with his attendants was approaching the village, and asked the question with which this paper commences.

In such a country as I am describing the villages are few and far between, partly because of many difficulties as to agriculture and markets, partly because of the resolute way in which the more

courageous wild beasts dispute with man hereabouts his pretensions to call himself "lord of the creation." On the plains, where the country is open and easily traversed, tigers never stay long in one place, or are likely to pay with their hides if they do; but on the shoulders of the hills, surrounded by thickets which are the fringe of an interminable forest, the striped Rajah of the forest is oftentimes master of the situation, and takes tribute from the cattle, goats, and dogs of the community, till he can be trapped or poisoned, or until he departs for some personal reason elsewhere. It is not so bad for the country people as long as he retains his natural dread of man, which is so instinctive that the Indian herd-boy will often fearlessly save his oxen by shouting at the attacking tiger, and even flinging his stick at him; nor do the slender Indian girls shrink from leading their goats to the stream or fetching home wood and grass because a tiger has killed a cow or kid just beyond the village fields. But at one time or another a tiger who has been, like the rest of his kind, terribly afraid of man in any shape, lays this dread aside on a sudden and for ever, and then becomes truly formidable. It is perhaps in most cases the result of an unintended experiment. The courage of a tiger is the courage not of pride, but of desperation, like that of a cat. He will get between the roots of the trees or the cracks in the earth to escape, but if escape be cut off, he will attack an elephant with armed sportsmen upon it, which is as if an infantry soldier should hurl himself

against the masonry of a fortress. In some fatal moment the Hindoo girl going with her pitcher, or the native agriculturist, or the local postman with his jingling bells has passed some spot where a tiger lay in wait watching the distant cattle grazing, or waiting for night-time to visit some tigress who has amorously responded to his roar. The beast has thought himself perceived, has feared to be cut off from his usual retreat, or the victim has shouted in terror, making the tiger hysterical with fright; and then in a paroxysm of rage and fear, it has snarled, and sprung forth, and dealt, in frenzy rather than design, that terrible blow with the forepaw which will stun a wild boar and dislocate the neck-bone of a bull. Before his roar of angry surprise has well echoed through the jungle, the man, or woman, or child lies a corpse under his claws, yet instinct forces him to go on, and to crunch the soft neck with his yellow fangs. Then the secret is out: the tiger has learned what a "poor forked thing" this lord of the creation is; how feeble his natural forces; how useless for self-defence that eye that was so dreaded; those hands that were so crafty; those limbs that bore him so haughtily with his head to the sky. Moreover, the tiger has tasted man, and found him as savoury to devour as he is easy to butcher, and from that time forth the brute neglects no further opportunity, but becomes step after step a confirmed "man-eater."

There appeared the other day, in an Indian newspaper, a letter from an English official who had

come across an instance where a young tigress, in the manner alluded to, had depopulated a district, killed dozens of men and women, and taken actual possession of a forest-road and tract. She began her career in July by killing two women near a woodland village, and at the end of the following December had slain at least thirty persons, becoming bolder and more cunning with each fresh murder. Her beat lay in some foot-hills, and she roamed over an area twenty-five miles long by three or four broad. The country was such that she could neither be tracked for any distance nor driven forth by beaters. She would not kill a tied buffalo, nor would she go back to a corpse if once disturbed. She became at last so bold that she ventured, in open daylight, to carry off men and women when cutting the crops in the terraced fields, stalking them from above and suddenly springing on them. The terror of her ferocity spread through the country. The villagers left their homes for safer regions, yet even in the forests the tigress learned to stalk the sound of an axe, and made many victims, before the woods were proved to be even more dangerous than the fields had been. The method of attack adopted was so sudden as to prevent any possibility of escape; the blow dealt so deadly as to render even a cry for help impossible. The victim was dead and carried off before his companions knew what had occurred. Constant efforts were made for her destruction—poison, spring-guns, and dead falls were ineffectually resorted to, any number of buffaloes were tied down at night, and

many a time the fresh trail of a kill was taken up in hopes of obtaining a shot at the tigress, but with no result. At last a file of soldiers were requisitioned to see what force could do to remove this horrible animal, cunning having been found of no avail. The beast was killed, and was found to be a young tigress, in perfect condition; the pad of her left forefoot had at one time been deeply cut from side to side, but had thoroughly healed, leaving, however, a deep scar, which proved her presence wherever she roamed. The same account mentions one instance in which two cowherds, living in a small grass hut in a somewhat wild forest, were cooking their food in the evening when this tigress suddenly sprang upon one and carried him off. His companion intimidated the animal with shouts and threats, and succeeded in making him leave his victim. Carrying his wounded companion into the hut, the trembling *Koombi* closed the entrance and waited for daylight. But this he never saw, because after a time, the tigress, emboldened by the increasing darkness, returned, and forcing her way into the hut, carried off the uninjured man, who was doubtless doing all he could to prevent the approach of the brute. The other, who had been first seized, died of his wounds and of sheer shock the next day, after relating the story to those who had found him.

The party of the Sahib that Indian evening came across just such a scene as is here spoken of. All Indian villages in this part of the Deccan are pretty much alike. The larger ones will, perhaps, have

rather imposing ramparts and towers made of mud, with a gateway regularly closed at night, which keeps out robbers and wild beasts, and may sometimes even be defended by armed men against troops. But the ordinary jungle village is either open to the plain and forest, or has at best a fence of dried thorn-bushes cut and piled around it, through which there will probably be many gaps. The huts within, of mud and wattle, ranged in a long dusty lane, or perhaps in a square, possess very flimsy wooden doors, sometimes only a hatch and a curtain. There will generally be seen an old tree in the middle of the village, and a little temple, perhaps only a mere porch, or *mandal*, built of sun-baked bricks and timber, approached by steps and open on one side. In the front of the temple will be a pole with a yellow flag; within the simple shrine probably a conical stone painted red, or an image grotesquely cut in marble or basalt of the monkey-god, Hanuman; or of Ganesha, the deity of wisdom. Ordinarily you would know you were coming to the village by the buffaloes trooping home, and as likely as not by lines of villagers entering with wood or fodder, as well as by the sounds, from the little abodes, of cotton bows twanging in the hut, where the peasant is fluffing his cotton before cleaning it in the gin; of the blacksmith beating his copper into shape for a *lota;* of the women singing the mill-stone song at the *chark;* or of the housewife driving backwards and forwards the beam of the hand-loom. If nobody should be at work, you would be sure to hear the monotonous but

exact rhythm of the tom-toms from somebody's house or kinsfolk feast; there would be a wall-eyed, shiny-hided buffalo wallowing in the village tank, a few white egrets stalking about its edge, a vulture perched upon the tree in the square, and much cawing of the crows watching for bits of chupatty from the hands of the little naked children.

But as that Sahib's party came down the hill-side by the widening path to the jungle village no sound whatever arose from its few and humble habitations. Nobody came out to make salutation or to offer supplies; no cattle were perceived wandering about, no children, no birds appeared, except indeed many vultures upon the tree in the square and on the temple roof. The pots in the grain-dealer's shop were empty and overturned, a piece of cloth just begun was left with broken threads upon the loom in the next hut. On the other side of the way the chatties at a potter's stall were tumbled and broken, and a sheet of copper lay at the blacksmith's forge half-bent to make some vessel, but precipitately abandoned. Wherever one gazed there were signs of a hasty flight on the part of the inhabitants, who did not seem to have left anybody to represent them. Yes! there was one silent and melancholy representative, and the sudden appearance of her would have startled the party very much more than it did but for a discovery made by the Sahib's *ghorawallah*—the groom—close by the silent and empty temple. There was a muddy patch there in the square, from which the last of the rain-water had but recently dried up, and, in the black

slime so left, were deeply imprinted the "pads" of an evidently immense tiger. It was, of course, evident now to the Englishman, and to those with him, that the striped Terror which left those foot-marks had given the villagers notice to quit, and was somewhere or other near at hand, in practical possession of the fee-simple of the village. Desolate beyond expressing was the little unpeopled "place" of the hamlet, and the look of that helpless red god staring from his portico upon the huts that he could not protect, along with the excitement of the hungry vultures perched on the cotton-trees, aware, no doubt, of the deadly secret of the place. For, round the corner, by the dyer's shop, where two or three newly-stained turban cloths still hung upon ropes to dry, they came upon that secret. Across the threshold of a mud hut, evidently dragged away from the broken charpoy on the earthen floor, lay the body of a woman, torn on the brown delicate neck and along the shoulders and breast, with long red claw-marks. A dead infant, also mangled by a savage bite, and with one of its arms nearly torn off, lay half concealed under the corpse, the appearance of the bodies showing that they had been only lately slaughtered. No one could doubt what had killed them. The sign-manual upon their bodies was obviously that of the royal beast, who often in this way disputes the right of his human rival in India, roaring to scorn the illusion that man is master of created things. The Sahib's party was badly equipped for tiger-shooting, and passed on—not without anxiety and the closing-up of the three

or four servants and coolies—through the outskirts of this evicted village. At any moment her ladyship the tigress or his lordship the tiger, who had taken possession of the spot, might emerge from a grain-

"THE LOOK OF THAT HELPLESS RED GOD STARING FROM HIS PORTICO."

store or a cow-pen, or even from some milk-bush or jowari-patch, to ask the travellers what business they had upon the royal property. The Englishman hastily put bullets into both barrels of his

shot-gun and walked his horse as quickly as his men could follow out of the ill-fated *gaum*. At its outskirts they were astonished to hear a voice high above their heads, which came, as they afterwards found, from a young Hindoo low-caste man sitting concealed in the branches of a large mango-tree, from which could be overlooked both entrances of the village. He had made a rude platform in a fork of the tree, and watched on it with the long barrel of a matchlock protruding, and by his side an earthen jar of water. They invited him to come down and to tell them the meaning of the extraordinary spectacle they had witnessed. He descended, and informed them that for weeks past his village had been infested and persecuted by a tigress, which, after killing cattle and goats, had slain and partly eaten three or four children outside the hamlet, and had taken, during the past eight or nine days, to entering the village at night and carrying off somebody or other sleeping, as Hindoos do, outside their huts under the verandahs. The woman slain that morning with her baby was the wife of the poor matchlock-man, and he had perched himself in the tree, hoping to avenge her death when the Sahib's party passed.

It was too serious a case not to be reported in the proper quarters, and an expedition of practised tiger-shooters was equipped among the officers at the nearest station. The beast was tracked, and was killed after receiving eleven bullets, and then it turned out that she had a half-grown cub which had lost a limb, so that the maternal affection of the

ferocious parent had driven it to such desperate ways. Indeed, the spectacle of that village was full of philosophical suggestiveness. The dead human mother had been slain by reason of the very same instinct which had made her seek in vain to preserve her child from the attack of the tigress, driven to its wit's ends to find food for its own helpless offspring. The tigress was in her way as tender a parent as the loving mother whom she murdered: and then, besides, there was the whole village depopulated, to make one wonder what sort of a world it would have been if, as might well have happened, tigers had evolved as masters of the globe instead of men.

XIII

WILD BOARS

"HE AT LAST PUTS ASIDE THE BUSHES AT THE EDGE OF THE PATCH AND EMERGES." P. 257.

XIII

WILD BOARS

In days when I used to fish and shoot and hunt, and variously kill the beautiful or interesting wild creatures of the woods and fields—which now I would not do—I came to know a good deal about the wild boar. And you cannot know much about him without very deeply respecting him. No beast has a higher pride or finer courage, and none becomes the savage surroundings of his home with better lordliness. He is afraid of nothing, armed as he goes with the twin scimitars of his gleaming tusks, and cased in bristly hide, which is a span thick over the withers. The Indian boar will do battle against the tiger itself, and not always get the worst of the contest, for one good rip with those sharp moon-shaped tushes—such as I have seen slash through saddle-girths and numdah, letting out a horse's entrails—will start a scarlet stripe among the black stripes of the tyrant of the jungle, out of which he quickly bleeds to death. And if sportsmen must and will slay—nor can it be maintained that slaughter is not the present way and law of Nature—then there is surely no sport in the world so entirely entrancing and exciting as "pigsticking" —to have tasted which is to despise evermore all

milder and more commonplace delights of the chase. In this pursuit, also, the wild hog often shows a magnificent courage. He hates to come out of the sugar-canes or the *jowari* field, where he has put up with his wife and family for the day. He more than half suspects the presence of those grey-coated men on the Arab horses, who are waiting in pairs outside the cover, with their bright spears balanced in the right hand, and the left restraining the fidgeting mouths of their steeds. But the beaters make such a tumult with sticks and drums and crackers, that his wife and children have bolted across the open already, and it is clear that he too must go. It is at a surly trot, however—disdainful and reluctant—when he at last puts aside the bushes at the edge of the patch and emerges—emerges to see with half an eye that his enemies are mounted and about to pursue him, now that they have got between him and his shelter. Well, he must make for another; but he does it with dignity, for he has supped heavily on the village crops all night, and the old grey boar values his digestion. What is this, however? A horseman on either side presses hard and harder after him, with the point of a glittering spear held close and low. It is abominable, but it is serious; he must change his trot for a gallop, and lead these insolent disturbers of his peace into the broken and rocky ground. Looking back out of the corner of his small eye, of which the white shows like a speck of mother-o'-pearl, his pig's heart rejoices to observe one of his foes come headlong down upon the smooth

trap-rock with a crash which will put him entirely out of the hunt, at any rate until the friendly thicket can be reached into which the sow and her litter are just now safely entering. Meantime the other spear has approached as the boar slacked a little on the hill-side, and, before he knew it was quite so near, the sharp point, slightly misdirected, glides on his skull-bone and goes right through the high-cocked ear. It does not damage the boar nearly so much as it infuriates him; and then you see that grim, grey *dookur* set up his bristles like a fence of aloe-stalks, and champ his foaming jaws, and swing round to charge the daring pursuer. You have need of a horse who knows his business at this moment, and you should well understand how to manage and recover your disappointed spear. If the Arab is thoroughly well trained, and you do not chance to come out of your stirrups with the sudden swing round—in which case the boar will probably end the chase by ripping you in a manner to make the doctors look serious—then the jungle-hog starts off discontentedly again for his still distant refuge, and you may add to the glory of "first spear" the joy of presently feeling the willow-leaf steel slide in a foot deep behind his gallant brisket; with a curious ease, too, as if the great pig were made of butter. It is the pace which does that—you need not thrust!—but in the small closing eyes of your victim as he rolls over on the rock you will still see the glare of an unconquerable and defiant courage.

The mention of any special wild animal which he

has long ago studied and followed usually brings back to the votary of the woodland and the waste some particular scene of his remembrance and experience. When anybody speaks of tigers, for example, I chiefly recall, as it were by instinct, a wonderful picture in the Indian jungle, when I saw from a *machan*—or platform of boughs, in a tamarind tree—two young tiger-cubs playing with a peacock which they had killed. Fortuny himself even could never have reproduced—for all his superb command of the palette—the splendid play and savage combination of colours which that hidden corner of the Indian forest furnished to the eye. The burning evening sun lighted with mellow gold the coats of the fierce little tiger-kittens—orange silk with stripes of black velvet—the broken amethysts and ruined emeralds of the poor bird's train cruelly scattered over the trampled grass; the blood-stained sapphires of his breast; the scarlet and silver jewels of his crest; his russet and black wings—all framed in by the waving boughs of the korinda bush and the long flags of jungle-grass. We did not interfere with the little monsters, because we were waiting just then for their mamma, who was more than suspected of having lately killed a village-girl, and had certainly slaughtered the dead cow over whose carcass the *machan* had been established. But that jungle-picture, with its blaze of sunset colour and wild beauty of death and passion and destruction, always comes again to my mind when there is talk of tigers.

As for the boar, he brings to recollection an especial scene of the Eastern wilderness. Of course, in India, we did not shoot the *dookur*—at all events, not near a station, or where he could possibly be "ridden." That would be as bad as to kill a fox with gun or poison in any English hunting shire; and how nefarious such a deed would seem, of course, no words could tell. Sydney Smith said once to a friend who was talking freely about a new clergyman's opinions, "Oh, don't call him a Socinian, please! They think hereabouts that that means netting pheasants or shooting a fox." I myself, on one sad occasion, killed by accident a dog-fox in some English turnips, not seeing him, and taking the movement in the leaves for the passage of a hare which we had started, and while we secretly buried Reynard where he fell, the feeling of remorse was exactly as if we had put to death a churchwarden; such is the force of tradition! But on that evening, and in that spot which I so well remember, I was positively obliged to slay a boar with lead instead of steel, to save a native and myself. It was amidst the pretty broken country round Poorundhur, not far from Poona, in the Bombay Presidency—a country of trap-hills, and vast plains of black soil, which splits open in summer-time, with innumerable wide fissures, into which the lizards and field-rats take headers as you walk, and where the snakes glide back and forth. I had been shooting quail, with none but native attendants, and as the sun touched the western horizon we came to the edge of a deep glen, wooded with

rounded clustered bushes, between which showed patches of yellow grass.

"Down in that nullah, Gharib-parwar!"—(Protector of the Poor)—"there are plenty of deer and hares; and perhaps a leopard," remarked my Mahratta shikari.

"Get fifty people of the village," I answered, "to-morrow morning early, and let us beat the nullah from top to bottom. We can do it if——"

"*Dekho! dekho!*" interrupted Raghu; "look, Sahib, look!" And where he pointed I saw something in the upper part of the valley moving downward, which might be hyæna, leopard, or anything. Obeying a not very wise instinct—for the light was rapidly failing—I snatched my rifle from Raghu's hand and ran down the slope, he following. What a lovely and lonely hollow it was in that silent Indian waste, with its smooth tables of sand and grass, its green bushy sides, and cascades of wild parasitical flowers growing on the tree-stems, while the tiny grey ringdoves flitted cooing from bush to bush, and from the thin string of water at the bottom the Deccan peewit, who cries "Did-you-do-it? Did-you-do-it?" rose, aware of our presence. Soon, a button quail bustled out of a cane thicket higher up, and settled almost at our feet—sure sign that something was coming. And something did indeed come! We were standing on a level patch of clear ground with dense cover above and below, and the twilight, which lasts so briefly in India, was already growing dim, when out blundered a big jungle sow, followed

by a pack of piglets, bent, no doubt, on a drink of water in the bottom, and afterwards the nightly forage. Motionless although we stood, she saw us from her little eyes, and grunted something perfectly

"I SANK ON MY KNEE, AND FIRED QUICK."

intelligible, beyond doubt, to her little ones, for they all immediately scurried hard across the open, hustling their lumbering mother. It was intelligible, moreover, to another pair of bristly ears,

for again the bushes opened, and forth into the patch of clear ground thrust a grand old grey boar—to whom, I believe firmly, his porcine consort had hastily but quite plainly remarked, "My dear! there are hateful men here. Rip them up—if you can."

At all events he did not seem surprised to see us, but champed his lips, grunted in a quick, angry way, and came straight for where we stood.

"*Maro! maro!*" cried Raghu—"shoot, shoot!"—and, truly, it was no time to have in mind the regulations of the Poona Hunt Club. I could just catch the sight of the rifle in the dim evening, as I sank on my knee, and fired quick, to get both bullets in. The first caught him on the right-hand tusk and sent it spinning—itself glancing aside. However, the boar turned its head away a little at the shock, and just slackened a bit in a manner to show his broad neck fair and square, not twelve yards off, so that my second bullet went clean through the cervical vertebræ. At the cost of a venatical impropriety Raghu and I were saved.

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XIV

THE WEALTH OF POVERTY

"HE HAD A GARMENT OF SOME SORT SPREAD OVER A BRIAR BUSH, AND WAS TARRING IT ASSIDUOUSLY." *P.267*

XIV

THE WEALTH OF POVERTY

I DRAW from the portfolio of memory the recollection of a man who, more than any other, taught me in early days how very slightly human happiness depends upon material possessions. The tendency of the present age is, it may be feared, to take the other view too strongly. If you will listen to the persons who make most noise on behalf of the working classes, and do least for them, you would incline to believe that another penny per hour more, or another hour of labour per day less, must make all the difference between misery and felicity. Is it not rather true that a man's life or a woman's life depends for real happiness upon the inner nature with which they are born, or to which they have educated themselves; that in all ranks and under all circumstances people can train and form their temperaments as easily as they can make a scarlet-runner climb upon strings? Everybody has a great deal of realised wealth to start with; even if there should be no silver-spoon ready to his mouth. Think only of the wonderful and beautiful body, with all its inherited developments of exquisite adaptation to common uses and daily delights. Why need the poorest girl or boy

envy the millionaire's steam-yacht, or the jewelled opera-glass of the duchess, when they have got their five senses in perfect order, with such machinery as engineers can only marvel at, and possess eyes—be they blue, or grey, or brown, or black—to see with. Over everybody's head is daily built a roof so glorious, so various, so arabesqued with fleecy clouds and filmy mists, that fresco-painted vaults of princely halls are dull matched with it. The fresh air and the sweet smell of flowers, and the taste of white water to the thirsty mouth, and the flavour of a fresh apple or of bread and cheese when you are hungry; and the soft, accommodating, refreshful sleep when you are tired: and beyond them all the sense—if we will only open heart to it—of the love, and mercy, and final safeguarding of some vast and just Power never to be named, but never to be doubted—all these things are to be had by everybody for nothing or next to nothing. When the charm of a warm and equable climate is added to such splendid common gifts, one sees whole nations —like the Malays, the Hindoos, and others —quite content with life just as it goes, and only doing such light work as suffices to make to-day feed to-morrow. Our English climate is not so indulgent, and consequently there arise here some few artificial but necessary wants which have to be supplied. But the difference between the pleasures of the rich man and of the poor man need not be nearly so great as envious people pretend. "The gods sell everything at a fair price," and the money they take in exchange is not gold and silver, but goodwill, right-

heartedness, honest effort to make the best of all circumstances, and reasonable sweetness of disposition.

The happiest individual I ever knew was the poorest. His appellation was Draper. That was all there was of his style and title, for he would have regarded anything additional as superfluity, and nobody indeed would have ever dreamed of asking such a waif for his Christian name. A Christian name implies christening, and parents, and god-parents, and being born beforehand in a regular manner; whereas Draper had never, to his knowledge, or that of anybody else, been inside a church or chapel, and had no more idea of who his father might have been than a cuckoo has. When I enjoyed the advantage of his acquaintance, he was a person of middle-age, square build, supremely perfect health—manifested by his magnificent appetite, white teeth, ruddy face, and eyes like grey diamonds—abominably bad clothes, battered hat, gaping boots, and an eternally radiant smile, with an ever-ready joke. He was Shakespeare's Autolycus in rags and tatters, gifted with the same wit and the same philosophy—being of a long-settled opinion that

> A merry heart goes all the way;
> Your sad heart tires in a mile-a.

But his rags and tatters were peculiar in this, that they glistened from a distance like the sides of a fishing-smack, and for the same reason. Draper was covered with tar inside and out. He was panoplied in it. What he liked best in the world was doing

nothing. In the winter, whenever he could, he did this in the nice soft straw of somebody's barn; in the summer he did it, deep in the foxgloves and ferns of some coppice bank, where he could lie on his stomach and watch the little creatures of the insect world go and come over and under their green bridges of the grass, and along the shady avenues that stretch beneath the buttercup leaves and gold balls of the crow's-foot. He knew and liked all woodland things, large and small, as if he had been a Faun; and understood the minds and the ways of weasels and foxes, hares and hedgehogs, field-mice and beetles, as if he had been himself in turns dipterous, coleopterous, quadrupedalian. But though he agreed with Aristotle that meditation was the only proper pursuit for a wise man, the need of beer and tobacco to assist meditation had forced him to a profession.

"There is lots of things," he once observed to me, "in the hedges wot's good to smoke, and wot makes werry nice tea—and I knows where to find wittles and a drink, where them fools" (pointing to the world in general) "would starve. But 'taint ekal to twist and porter. That's why I works!"

What he worked at was tarring the farm-premises of the yeomen and gentry of that part of Essex. The profession had immense advantages. It was mainly practised in the early part of the year; it was very well paid for, because it was dirty and dangerous; it wanted no capital, since the farmers and squires supplied tar-kettles, brushes, and ladders; and it

kept its professor in touch with the one commodity which he loved and valued, the scent of which was the breath of life to his nostrils—namely, what he designated "Stockhollum tar." The famous philosopher who wrote a treatise on "The Virtues of Tar-water" would have found in my resinous friend a man after his own heart. One day, wandering with my gun, I came across Draper at the end of a long green lane, which was called the Pikehull, so busily engaged that the spectacle of his unusual animation was astonishing. He had a garment of some sort spread out over a briar-bush in full and fragrant blossom, and he was tarring it assiduously with the long brush used in his avocation. This conversation ensued:

"Why, Draper! what on earth are you doing?"

"Mornin', sir! Lor, sir! the money that it 'ud save in soapsuds if people was only up to what I'm a-doin'."

"What is it?"

"Well, dow my bright buttons!" (this was his usual ejaculation in moments of earnestness) "'tis a bad thing for the washerwomen; and I dessay you'll have shirts enough not to want me to larn it to you; but 'tis my yearly rig-out that I'm gettin' ready."

"Your yearly rig-out?"

"Yus. Onst a year I goes to Billericay and I buys a cotton shirt, and I tars him inside and outside like this 'ere. You mustn't wear him before he's dry both sides, and has been well crinkled in wood-smoke; do, it 'ull never keep good. Arter that's all

done I puts him on, and wears him night and day till the year comes round again."

"Draper, you must be as tarry as the side of the barn!"

"There's nothing like it, sir, to keep a man sound. What's good for the buildings is good for the stuff we're made of, inside and out. Look here, sir! you just give me a drop out of your flask, and I'll fill it up with 'Stockhollum,' and drink your werry good health."

He did, too! for there was a broken teacup lying near, which he washed; and after I had poured two fingers-breadth of whisky into it, Draper cheerfully brimmed the liquor up with tar out of his ladle and tossed off the mixture with the utmost apparent gusto. He wiped the brown strings from his lips, and went on:

"Why shouldn't it be good, sir? 'Tis the life out of the green woods; the blood of the trees! You can't have no ache in the innards if you takes a little now and then of real Stockhollum. Not too much, mind yer! Smell to it! What's these yer hedge-roses to the waft of the tar-pot? I was werry nigh going to sea onst, only for the sake of the ropes."

I am afraid he liked the tar, though, all the better for the whisky underneath it. Still, he was a sober man—too fond of the feeling of perfect health to throw that away for the townsman's costly and melancholy pleasure of inebriety. There is an art even in tarring the side of a cowshed or stable, and Draper in his line was an artist to be depended upon.

Working high up upon his ladder, he could make a kettle of tar go farther and cover up more weather-boarding than any ordinary hand, and the farmers were glad to employ him. Most of his spring and summer money thus earned was saved for the winter, when, after wandering about among the works of his brush—which he always regarded with as much pride as a Raphael or Perugino could have felt over any finished canvas—he would retreat to the seaside and hybernate among the fishing-smacks and the tarry cordage, doing a little professional job or two for the fishermen, until spring brought him forth again to buy a new shirt and renovate the farm premises of half the county.

He was a little too omnivorous for civilised society. One day he saw me taking a rabbit-trap from a burrow —I am sorry I ever set one; I would not do it now! I drew my hand out quickly with an exclamation of pain, for it was a hedgehog which had got itself caught, not a rabbit, and about a score of sharp needles had been driven into my fingers. He asked for the poor little trapped beast, and when I next passed that way he was enjoying a midday meal of fat bacon, cheese, and the whole bottom of a half-quartern loaf, with what looked like an open melon or a split cocoanut. Examining more closely, I found he had cooked, and was eating with high satisfaction, the prickly prey begged from me.

"There's nuthin' ain't a better flavy, sir," he said, joyously, between two mouthfuls, "than a young hedge-pig. You opens and cleans 'em—did you ever

see the inside of a hedge-pig, sir? 'Tis like a posey of flowers. Then you rops 'em in a ball of clay and makes a went-hole and shoves 'em into the middle of a wood-fire, and when 'tis done you splits it open, and the pricks and skin comes away just like the husk of a chestnut; and you eats 'em. Won't you just try a little bit?"

I said I thought I would not; but I perceived that Draper could live sumptuously where other people would go empty. Knowing so completely the habits of every living thing in the country, this easy-going philosopher of the tar-bucket would have made a desperately successful poacher; but two sentiments held this innate propensity in check, one was his profound fear of the squires and magistrates, with whom it was all-important to stand well—and they could forgive anything except poaching—the other was his deep and unaffected love of the wild creatures. I found him on one occasion setting the broken leg of a young thrush with as much tenderness and solicitude as if it had been his own child. He had wound the fluff of some thistledown over the place, and lightly but securely bound two tiny pieces of split willow-bark round it, making such a good operation of it that when he let the bird loose it chirruped what sounded like thanks, and perched upon a branch near at hand. "There!" he said, "that ain't the first job of the sort what Doctor Draper's done for you and your likes—pooty creeturs! Dow my bright buttons, sir! I ain't got no better friends than the birds and the beasts, nor I

don't want none." Still, I have reason to believe that, now and again, when somebody's wife was ill that had been kind to him, Draper, in the dark, would hang a hare or a couple of rabbits upon the poor woman's door-handle, and when she got up in the morning and went out to fetch sticks for fire, there was breakfast, dinner, and supper all provided, with no card to say that they came from the estates of my illegal friend.

He knew plants and trees and flowers, and their virtues, almost as well as Solomon, in spite of the arch-heresy of preferring the scent of tar to the perfume of a wild rose. An instance of his agricultural acumen comes to mind. There was a field of winter wheat about which we were anxious, as it had been sown with doubtful success and was very late in showing above ground. Out one morning early about the estate, I met Draper at a stile, tarry from head to foot, his stubbly beard and short black hair like tarred oakum, his hands and wrists like tarred tub-staves, his face streaked with tar strings, with a bit of the golden sallow-blossom between his white teeth, and his eyes shining with the delight of being alive on such a morning.

"We shall have to plough this twelve acres up," I said; "the blade won't come."

"Won't it, sir?"

"No. Look for yourself. It is as brown—well, as brown as you are, Draper."

Down he went upon his tarry stomach, put his cheek to the ground, and gazed along the surface for a moment, then, rising to his feet, exclaimed:

"Dow my bright buttons, sir! 'tis five quarters to the acre your guv'nor will reap off that, if he lets it alone."

And, surely enough, when you looked along the level of the soil in this cunning manner, catching all the ridges together, there was a beautiful light green film of young wheat spreading from headland to headland, and the whole field had become changed from brown to emerald.

I am afraid I cannot speak of my bituminous, but ever-cheerful and resourceful acquaintance, as a strictly moral character. He was a philosopher, a naturalist, and a kindly-hearted vagabond; but to one who wears only a single shirt from year's end to year's end, many of our most respected institutions must naturally present themselves in an otherwise than sacred light. He was accompanied occasionally upon his tarring expeditions by a not uncomely female, whom he called sometimes his "wife," albeit it was doubtful if she could have shown any legal claim to that title. A young woman of tastes so unconventional as to put up with the perpetual society of Draper and his tarpot was not likely to have been particular about "lines" or settlements. Yet this Audrey of my Essex Touchstone seemed positively attached to her gay, worthless, easy-hearted associate, and did his biddings as cheerily as he dispensed them. Riding one day far away from their proper beat, and in a district where the couple were not known, I came upon them under a beech-tree in a lane dining luxuriously upon cold pork-chops and sausages.

Questioned about such unaccustomed luxuries, Draper put that extra twinkle into his grey eyes which always accompanied a confession of wickedness, and told me how they had come across the country from union to union to get to the tarring again.

"But skilly every night, and stones to break every morning," he said, "gives yer appetite for suthin else. So my missus here ties her shawl in a lump under her apron, and we goes together to the big house yonder, and knocks at the kitchen door, me a limpin' on a stick, and she lookin' heavy and faint; and I ses, ses I, 'Could you give us a little broken wittles? the wife's expectin' every minute, and I've turned my ankle trampin', and 'twould be a good charity.'"

What became of Draper eventually is beyond my knowledge. The last I heard of him he was in gaol for poaching, which seemed so unlike his usual prudence about game that I made inquiries. And it must be confessed that the true story of this ultimate transgression was not so very discreditable to the tarry optimist. He was out on one of his moonlight tramps from farm to farm when he saw an acquaintance carrying a gun, with a hare and a brace of pheasants lying beside him. The man had been poaching, and the keepers being after him, in jumping a gate he had hurt his leg and could go no farther. "Here, Tar-pot," says the poacher, "take this hare for your dinner to-morrow. They'll have me soon, for I can't stand up; and I'm sorry for the sake of the wife and little ones." "How many chillun ha' ye got, matie?" "Five, and that's why I was out

to-night. 'Tis too dear to buy the butcher's meat, and they was pinin'!" "Look here," says Draper, "I ain't got nothin' to do till the fore part of March. If they didn't see the shape of ye, gi' me the gun and the birds, and you creep in under them hollies. I'll go up the road and fire the gun, as if I catched her trigger in a thorn runnin' away, and they'll pounce out and be satisfied with Draper. You crawl in, matie! and give my respects to the missus and the kids!"

Which nefarious plot was duly carried out, and Draper—very demure and contrite in the dock for his heinous offence, got six weeks, and an awful warning from the bench. I sent his friend, the real sinner, a little gift to convey to those sadly immoral but generous hands when the imprisonment should be over; and that was the very last I ever knew about the light-hearted tar-man.

XV

STRONGER THAN DEATH

"YOU WOULD NOTICE THAT GRACE FALTERED A LITTLE AS SHE CAME UP THE PATH, EVEN WITH THE LIGHT WEIGHT OF A BUCKET OF WATER."

P. 281.

XV

STRONGER THAN DEATH

SPRING comes upon the sea with almost as much grace and change and sweetness of season as upon the land. The meadows of the ocean have their times of cold, dark fallow in the winter, of re-awakening in the spring, and of large fruitfulness in the summer, just as the fields ashore have them; but you must know the elements well to observe the various signs which show this. Anybody, of course, can notice the bettering of the weather, and the lifting of the sky, and the new colours of the waves and waters when the last of the east winds has blown itself out and the days begin to be longer than the nights. Anybody can feel and welcome the difference in the breeze which comes over the quiet sea along with the early whisper of May, and those bitter, howling winter gales which chill and kill. But only sea-birds and fish and sailors can tell, by what floats and swims and flies, that the good days are coming upon the water before they come, and when it is the season to look out for this, that, and the other token of the weather which brings the bright side of the fisherman's and mariner's life. There was a village which I used to know well—in the West of England—where you could study all this

sea-lore as advantageously perhaps as anywhere in the world, and where the fisher-folk were as fair specimens of the honest, brave, loyal, and industrious "common people" of England as a man would wish to meet and be friends with. It is because I remember along with that village a rather touching story of humble but true love that I draw to-day this particular little picture forth from the portfolio of memory.

I remember it especially by the wonderfully pretty girl who lived with an old aunt and two small sisters in the cottage close under the great cliff which rose to the westward of the hamlet. Everybody must have experienced how often a place will associate itself in the mind with a face, when much more important localities pass clean out of the thoughts for want of such a link of human interest. I don't think anybody with eyes could have forgotten Grace Williams if he had once seen her—she possessed such real distinction of feature, and such natural elegance, without being in the least discontented with her station and her lowly daily duties. In full health, she had a mouth like a rosebud, long black hair, dark shining eyes, and a step along the cliff's edge like the pacing of a hen-peacock, if you have ever noticed how grandly that bird walks. But when I and my wife first saw her near her cottage door she was not quite well. Her comely face was pale, her lips seemed a little thin and colourless, and, stately and symmetrical as her figure showed, you could notice that Grace faltered a little as she came up the path, even with the light weight of a bucket of

water. This was so evident that I remember taking the pail—with a joke—from her hand, and finishing the hill-climb for her, while she talked with my wife; and so we learned that she was indeed somewhat weak in the chest, in spite of all her stateliness and splendid beauty, and seemed to be threatened with consumption.

All this did not prevent two of the best-looking and most prosperous of the young fishermen of the village from falling over head and ears in love with her, of which we quickly heard, because everybody knew it, and nobody better than Grace herself. They are a simple and manly breed—down on those shores—neither ashamed of their emotions nor wont to give them any very sentimental expression. They love—as they work, and as they fight, and as they worship God—in quiet earnest, and I expect that one thing which worried Grace, and helped to pull her down, for she always showed herself as good and honest a girl as she looked lovely, was just the troublesome pleasure of having two such handsome young fellows as John Petherick and William Clannen in love with her, and not quite knowing which she liked best, nor how on earth such a resolute rivalry as theirs was going to end. Even when we grew to know her a great deal better, and the subject of her lovers was quite a permitted one in conversation, she never would give any sure clue to her secret feelings. She always spoke of them both with womanly respect and modesty. From the very first close observers thought it was William

who was the favoured swain, but this was a mere guess, and came out of an incident which happened one stormy afternoon in the autumn.

The morning had been fine, but at midday a wind rose up from the south-west suddenly, and rolled a rough sea along the feet of the cliffs. Clannen had gone out after his lobster-pots alone, and whether one of them had drifted, which he was trying to recover, or whether, skilful boatman as he was, he misjudged the force of the incoming surge, he got his dingey flung upon the rocks and stove in, while he himself, in scrambling out upon a ledge of the cliff, sprained his ankle, and by the same fall broke his right arm. This was not known until the broken boat of Clannen was seen driving over the rollers eastward, at which time the tide was already half-flood, and the place where poor crippled Will was perched had become perfectly inaccessible from the sea. How they found out that place was all through Grace, who forgot entirely about her languor, and went out in the wind and rain with the rest of the villagers. It seems a smack, scudding across the bay, had somehow signalled that there was a man on the ledge of the cliff; but the difficulty was to find out where. The surf and the wind created too much uproar for human voices to be heard, and the cliff in many places overhung its base, so that it would never have been discovered where the unlucky Will had lodged but for Grace, who hit upon the idea of throwing great stones wrapped in newspapers over each possible point, until one thus flung was

answered by one thrown with a splash upon the face of an incoming "smooth," and the anxious village knew just where its man was waiting for help.

At first what was to be done appeared obvious and easy. A light line was lowered over the cliff's brim with a small stone and the body of a child's kite at the extremity; and, sure enough, by walking along the edge slowly and letting the gale blow this inwards, it was presently seized. Then a strong rope was lowered exactly in the same spot, with a length of floating thread at the end, and this also was caught by the invisible Clannen. All these shore-folk can climb like goats, and hang to a rope like spiders, so the folk now quite expected Will to make a bowline in his rope, and signal to be hauled up. Instead of this he jerked hard at the thin cord, which they could now afford to pull up, and when it came in sight there was a bit of paper screwed into its loop, on which was pencilled:

"Broke my arm, and can't stand. Sea over rock in half hour."

Well, that meant sharp work if Clannen was to be saved, and the villagers were puzzled, for it would be probably useless now to lower him even a boatswain's stool. They were eagerly discussing the problem when John Petherick pushed the talkers aside, and, flinging off his sea-jacket and tightening his belt, said, with a hard look at Grace's quiet but pale face:

"Here! cast me over, mate, in a bow-line, and lower a chair along of me. I'll put Bill safe and sound on the grass, or break my own neck."

They offered no objection, because it was touch and go, and people thereabouts are not afraid to die, or to see others die, where they live lives so simple and faithful. So, over the red rim of the sandstone crag went Jack, with a coil of spun yarn in his hand and the second rope; and it was noticed that Grace picked up his pilot coat and carefully folded it over her arm. After he was out of sight it was impossible to hear his voice or to communicate; but as he slung himself across the crumbling brink into the gusty air, he said to the sturdy group holding on to the ropes—

"Haul up when I jerk three times. Hold hard when I jerk once; and if I do it twice send me down another man."

There was a long awful pause, awful because Will might be washed away, or a hundred bad things happen; but the rope presently lost its strain—Jack had reached the ledge. There he found Clannen faint and soaked with the spray, which was now and again running green over his rock, and threatening to wash him off as he clung with one hand to it. He managed, however, to help his rival athwart the boatswain's stool, and to lash him with the light cord to the rope, after which he gave the three jerks, keeping his own line quiet until the injured man was well aloft. Then he put his leg farther into the bow-line, and shook his own rope thrice, and first Will came to safety, sadly broken and soaked; and after him Jack, pretty nearly drowned with the breakers, which would have washed anybody off the ledge in another ten minutes.

Days passed; poor Will Clannen went into hos-

pital to be patched up for his winter work, and Petherick in his hours of leisure hung much about Grace's cottage, and always had at least kind words and looks from her. But the day's exposure upon the cliff had done the girl serious harm. There

"THERE HE FOUND CLANNEN FAINT AND SOAKED WITH THE SPRAY, WHICH WAS NOW AND AGAIN RUNNING GREEN OVER HIS ROCK."

was a foolish doctor living near at hand, who had frightened her already nervous spirits, telling her she was in a very bad way indeed in regard of her lungs, and would hardly live out the winter. Possibly

his unlearned croaking might have come true, for the cottage she inhabited was in a stuffy nook of the shore, and she was working too hard, by far, upon indifferent food, for her aunt and little sisters, besides the pain it gave her gentle heart to see Jack and Will glaring like lions at each other, whenever they met on the quay or the sands, all for her sake. But one day my wife found her at home crying, and trying to hide away some needlework upon which she was engaged. It was black stuff that she was making up into children's dresses, and she had to piteously confess that it was mourning, and that, as she felt sure she should die before long—just when life was so pleasant, and she had the choice of the two best young men in the place—why, she was getting together something for her aunt and the little ones to wear after she was gone, that everything "might be respectable." We were both very much disgusted and angry when we heard what a melancholy result the doctor's visit and examination had had upon pretty Grace. What she wanted was merely change and sunshine, and therefore having made some very easy and inexpensive arrangements with a captain whose ship was at Plymouth, we broke into her cottage one day and rallied her into hope, and happiness, and excitement, something in this brutal fashion: "Rubbish, Grace! The doctor is an ass. You are not going to die—but to live and grow stout and strong; and come back as fresh as a cabbage-rose, and marry the lad you love, whichever he is, and put the other one out of his misery."

And then it was unfolded to her rapidly brightening eyes how there was a fruit schooner going inside of a week to the Azores, and how her passage was paid for in it, and a three months' stay ashore in the Sunny Islands all provided for; and how she would be with nice and kind people all the winter, and must eat her head off, if she could, on the island grapes and pine-apples and beef, and how the African mail-steamer would bring her home in the late spring fat as a quail.

All which duly happened, and Grace did, indeed, come back in May as beautiful as any low-born and uneducated angel could look, and as strong and well as a Devon heifer in the clover. Jack and Will had been going on fairly peaceably during her absence, and had even taken spells of friendly work together, though they never talked about Grace, and once or twice punched the heads of village chatterers who ventured to supply this deficiency in daily village gossip. But when Grace Williams came home in company with the May-blossom—which was not one bit sweeter or more fresh—and took her first walk along the cliffs and down upon the sands by the little harbour, the truce was perforce at an end between these two manly young fellows, of whose honest hearts her beauty had made "roast meat." I heard afterwards that something like the following conversation occurred at the boat-building yard by the quay:

"You'll be clean quit of that crack in your arm-bone now, I'm reckoning, Bill."

"Ay, Jack. The doctor at Exeter fished it fine. 'Tis sound as a new spar."

"And the leg, Bill? Is that in good fettle again?"

"I don't to-day know so much as that I ever even wrenched it. 'Tis wonderful what them hospital bandages did."

"Well, then, Bill, I want you to do me the biggest kindness a man could ask of another man."

"Look here, Jack, I'll do for you just anything in the world—except one thing. I ain't forgotten the day you come over the clift to fetch me up out of that mess."

"Well, then, now that you're all right and fit again, I want you to fight me to a regular dead finish, and see who is the best man, and the man that loses to clear out of this place, and the man that wins to be free and lonely to ask Grace Williams to be his wife."

Those who heard about this and told us, related that Will hung in the wind a little.

"I know you ain't a coward," Petherick broke out. "Why don't ye answer?"

"I'm afeard, if we onst begin, I shall kill 'e, Jack! And then suppose the wrong man won, and Grace wouldn't have him?"

"If I chance that," answered Petherick, "you can chance it. Will 'e fight?"

"Ay, lad!" was Clannen's reply; "I owe you too much. I ain't no right to say no. I'll fight!"

Thus it was all privately settled, as afterwards appeared, that the ancient ordeal of combat should decide the possession of the fair; and these Devonshire men were so straightforward and truthful that I feel sure they would have stuck to the contract.

But while their loving though pugnacious souls proposed, Heaven had otherwise disposed. It was said by the few in the secret that the time and place were fixed for the duel, and that Grace herself had heard something about it, since she was seen speaking to Will Clannen outside her aunt's door, and handing him something in a packet. However this may be, my little story must have, I regret to say, a sombre end, for that Homeric combat—as it must certainly have proved—never came off.

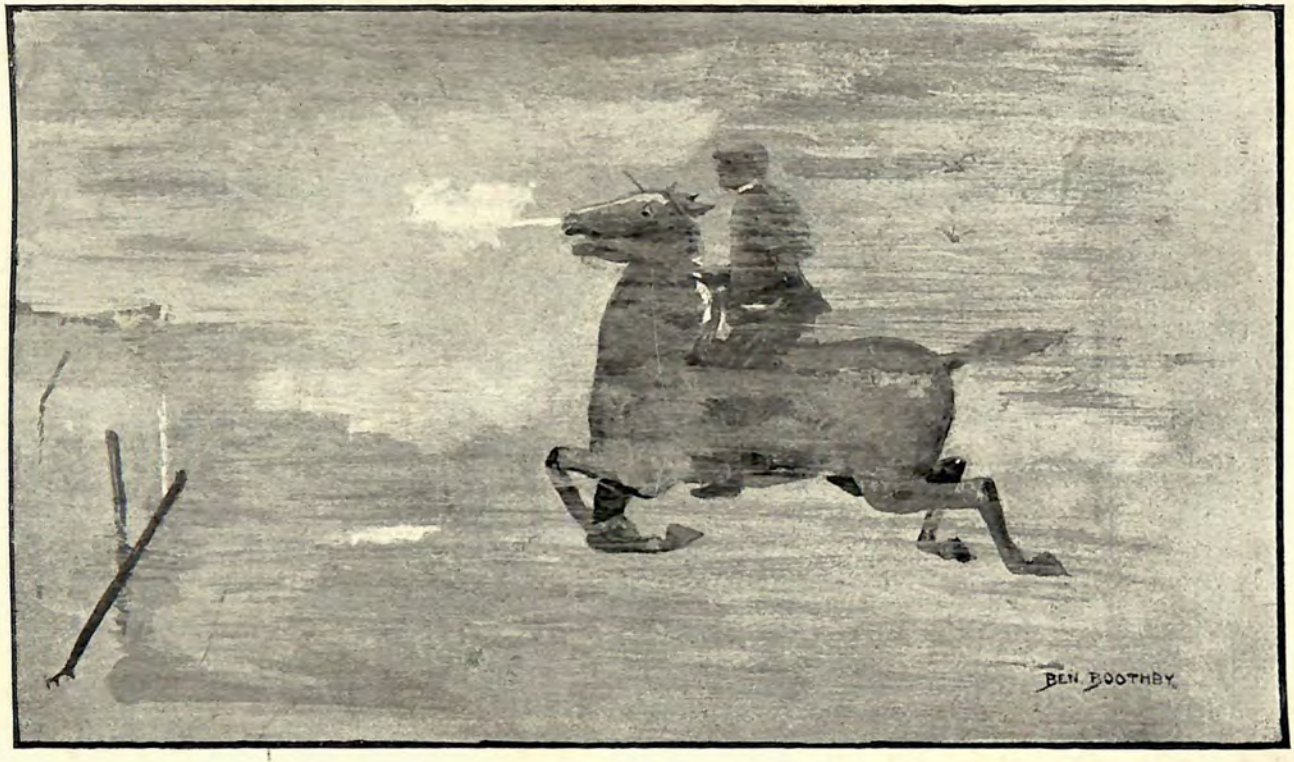
There broke forth a great storm with the early summer, blowing right on to the coast; and in the darkness of one wild night a large barque came ashore on the reef at the outer horn of the bay. We had a lifeboat station, and as soon as daybreak rendered things at all plain she was launched, but in such an unseamanlike hurry that some of the life-belts were left behind. Jack Petherick and Will Clannen were both among the volunteers who manned the boat, which was started with great difficulty, owing to the heavy rollers, but nevertheless reached the vicinity of the wreck, and proceeded to veer down within rescue distance of her distressed company lashed in the mizen rigging. I was not at the village at the time, but was informed that pretty Grace Williams stood in the throng at the launching, and was seen to turn away with tears in her beautiful eyes when Jack Petherick passed by her to jump into his place. During that manœuvre of veering down to the wreck an enormous wave broke upon the lifeboat

and capsized her, flinging all the crew into the boiling sea. Petherick was a splendid swimmer; but Clannen, like too many seafaring men, was utterly ignorant of the art. I don't like to think of what ensued, and will cut short the close and careful account which afterwards reached my ears. In the hard rowing and the shock of the capsize Clannen's sea-shirt had got torn open, it seems, and they say there was a long wisp of black-braided hair, tied with a bit of scarlet ribbon—the colour Grace always wore—hanging round his bared neck, in a length of thin marline. Whether poor Jack's eyes lighted upon this in the confusion cannot surely be known. Some say they did—some say he expected to see the lifeboat right herself directly, and felt himself safe enough in the water to be, as he always was, generous. At all events what happened, and what was witnessed and heard, was this: Clannen was sinking, when Petherick pushed the oar he was holding under the drowning man's arms and called out, "Catch hold, Bill; that fight's off!"

They never clapped eyes on him again till his poor body was picked up by a trawler westward of the Start, much disfigured with long soaking in the sea. The coxswain of the lifeboat thought he could easily have saved himself. I don't know. I only know that Grace became Mrs. Clannen, and that she and Will had a boy named Jack Petherick Clannen the last time we visited the village, now years and years ago.

XVI

HOW THE DEAD SAVED THE LIVING



"WHEN THE FOG LIFTS, HE LOOKS AND SEES A LITTLE BIT OF A TWINKLE." P. 295.

XVI

HOW THE DEAD SAVED THE LIVING

In times that are past I was myself a sea-gleaner occasionally, going out now and then by night as well as by day in those little sailing craft of the Thames and Medway called "borleys;" or, in the winter, on sprat-boats; or putting the trawl down on moonlit evenings or bright cold mornings from some little vessel of my own. At the present season, when the fishing for the lordly salmon is just recommencing, it might seem trivial to talk of such small fry as flat-fish, shrimps, sprats, crabs, and the like. But if you had once known anything about these minor industries of the water, and made any close acquaintance with the honest, hardy men and boys who pursue them; if, above all, you have sailed in their tiny but well-handled craft, the interest in their labours and their lives could never quite depart. Besides, it is more true of them and their ways than of almost any set of toilers by land or sea, that "many a little makes a mickle." Small as their daily catch may be, the dwellers on shore would miss their service very soon and very much if they were not almost always out upon the tide, at the mouths of our rivers, gathering up the "unconsidered trifles of the deep." And it "runs into good money"

for them and theirs when the winter, as now, proves an open one, and when the "little fishes" are fairly plentiful. Of late, for instance, there has been an excellent time all round the Kentish and Essex coasts with the sprat, which is not, as was once supposed, the young of the herring, but a separate species, distinguished by its size and serrated ventral edge. True whitebait, also a great resource of the winter river-fishermen, should consist of young sprats and young herrings; for there is no such specialised fish, as naturalists once thought, giving it, indeed, a Latin name "all to itself." The whitebait, as it comes to table, comprises, under its fair mask of fried batter, all sorts of fry, including those of gobies, weevers, sand-eels, plaice, dabs, shrimps, and sticklebacks. Sprats, if they were only more expensive, would be regarded, probably, as the greatest dainty of the deep; more toothsome, as they are far more nourishing, than salmon, sole, whitebait, or than smelts among ourselves, than blue fish and lake-trout in the States, than even the Bombay "duck," or the Japanese *tai*. And when the sprats come, it is "in battalions." The average catches lately made among the forty-five to fifty boats employed from Deal round to Dungeness have been 3000 measures for each boat on each tide, which means £7, 10s. a day per craft, since there is a ready sale, now that factories near at hand have taken to potting and tinning the little fish. When the takes have been paid for, there will also be scores of women kept busy in preparing the sprats, and other hands engaged in soldering up

the tins. At Deal recently the boatmen cleared £475 among themselves from a catch of three days only; and there are three hundred people employed in one factory at that town, so that the sprat is becoming locally more and more important.

It was not an unpleasing experience in the crisp wintry weather of bygone years to sit in the well of a sprat boat, when the "stow-net" had been shot. The men fish from November to February, and the mouth of the Thames is as good a place for the business as any in the world. The stow-net is immensely long, a full-sized one measuring from fifty to sixty yards. First there is a great square mouth, 30 ft. high and 20 ft. wide, called the "quarters;" then comes the "enter," a sort of network tunnel 80 ft. or 90 ft. long and 6 ft. in diameter, followed by another long tube of 80 ft. or 90 ft., comprising first the "sleeves" and then the "dock-hose" or "cod," where the net fines down into a mere point and the meshes grow very small. The smack takes up her position at the beginning of the tide in a spot where she can see signs of fish, or knows that they will come; casts anchor, downs canvas, and puts the vast net overboard, under the vessel. There is a line fast to the anchor from the bridle-rope, and net and ship thus ride by the same tackle, while the "quarters" can be raised or lowered by means of upper beam-ropes to the proper elevation, the lower beam being weighted so as to hang down and keep the square entrance wide gaping. Into this open gateway of meshes drives the shoal, and myriads of

the little fish swim, or get thrust deeper and deeper, along the "enter," till the "cod" begins to stream out, full and heavy, astern of the smack. As likely as not the anchor may drag a little with the weight of the ship, of the close-wove net, and of the gathering fish; but that matters little. So long as the tide runs, the stow-net continues to stream, and the sprats to crowd in, until the first sign comes of slack water, when the chain is tightened which lies across the mouth of the net, thus closing it; the beams are hauled up under the bolt-sprit, the long brown tunnel of meshes is drawn on board with the help of iron hooks until the "cod" is reached, and then that also is dragged in-board by the tail-rope. This rope being cast loose, out flashes a living river of silver, which the master, like a maritime alchemist, stirs and puddles and measures out, three bushels at a time, using a wooden implement called the "mingle." Tons and tons of the tiny silvery prey may thus be taken in a few hours, and while the weather is steadfast it is agreeable enough to rock in the well of the smack, waiting for the slack water, and well assured by the excited screaming of the gulls that the sprats are moving, and that the patience of the hour will be rewarded. With sudden squalls and a quick-rising sea the stow-net is an awkward affair to handle, and there are times when the "cod," with all its water-wealth of glittering food, must be cut open and emptied to save net and ship.

In the wide open waters of the Thames and

Medway mouths, where these "little people of the sea," the sprat-smacks and borleys, gather in humble fleets, there shows no such majesty of the element as Victor Hugo has so wonderfully described in his "Travailleurs de la Mer." No wild play of billows occurs among such rocks and caverns and rugged reefs as the great French poet has painted. No iron-bound coasts arise with a fierce line of leaping breakers at their feet. There are no mysterious caverns full of sea secrets, where dead men are lost to sight, and marine monsters lurk. The shores are almost everywhere low-lying saltings and marshes, of immense expanse, of monotonous character, of the most desolate and lonely scenery which could be imagined. Interminable creeks and ditches intersect these salt and sour meadows of the North Sea; their waving growth of weeds and rushes is the breeding places of wild-fowl; their muddy banks are perforated everywhere with the holes of myriads and myriads of crabs, which, along with water-rats, shrimps, and small flat-fish, tenant the melancholy streams. These prodigious wastes of rank sea-grass, samphire, and salted mud—especially where they lie outside the sea-walls—are so solitary that it seems "a land where no man comes, or hath come since the making of the world." Many and many such a tract exists within sixty miles of London town amongst these amphibious wastes, half water and half gull's ground, where a man can be more alone than in the desert of Sahara. He might die there, and remain longer undiscovered

than if his bones had been deposited on a reef of the Roccas, or a cay of the Bahamas, or a sandbank of the Pescadores. And they possess their own dangers, too, these nameless, unvisited, far-extending saltings of the Kent and Essex and Suffolk coasts—dangers to landsmen as well as to seamen.

There is a place I remember where a vast, flat, lonely, outlying island is cut off from the mainland by a broad strait, miles across, which goes dry at low tide, but fills up on each flood, and, at spring-tides especially runs very deep and strong. The spot is well known, and the track across the sands is marked with willow-poles planted here and there, if the winds and waves have not carried them adrift. The spratters and shrimp-boats sometimes steal up this passage on the flood, and a barge or two may blunder through it for a short cut. But ordinarily the place is as lonely as any sea-front at Cape Horn, its solitude intensified by the wail of the gulls, the cry of the curlew and peewit, and the croak of some crow flying homewards, full of cockles. Woe to the wild-fowl shooter or belated traveller who comes to that passage, that dry strait of sand, without knowing its peculiarities! He would think nothing safer or simpler. There is the wide yellow stretch of apparently firm crossing; upon it, perhaps, the track of footmarks or the impression of wheel ruts. Beyond, a few miles away, rises dimly the green outline of the Essex farms and woods. The light is good, the sea is down; why should he not go over? But he will cross at peril unless he notes

the time of the flood-tide and the direction of the wind, for the speciality of the spot is terrible. It will beguile you to the passage, and then midway, before you can see the far edge of the flood-tide making, or hear the low hissing murmur of it creeping into the creeks, the sands under your feet will suddenly become wet, glistening, sodden; the sea will enter, as it were, from beneath; the ground which was firm becomes shivering and soft; and when the tide makes, it will come sweeping in, breast deep, neck deep; at last, sometimes, and in places overhead, bringing volume enough to drown not only a pedestrian, but even a horse and cart with its driver.

Lying up in that very creek one day on board a small smack, near to a solitary fisher's cottage which stood on the edge of the land-wall, I remember inquiring of our old skipper why he had a lighted candle and an open book rudely carved upon the beam of the half-deck.

"'Tis odd ye should ask that here, sir," he said, taking his black clay-pipe out of his mouth and pointing with the stem of it to the cottage, "for it's all along of that werry house there, and so's this boat all along of it, too!"

"How can that be?" I inquired.

"Well, it's like this!" the grey-headed fisherman answered; "the name of this boat, as ye know, is the *Grateetood*, and that 'ere open book on the beam, why 'tis a Bible; and that there candle figured is a candle what saved a man's life and built the

Grateetood; leastways, she'd never have been launched without it."

And then, in response to my natural curiosity, he narrated, with frequent clouds of retrospective tobacco-smoke, this little marsh-story, here greatly condensed, and freely translated from his Essex dialect:

"'Tis many years ago, now, sir, for I've sailed this little boat off and on for twenty-six seasons. And 'twas a gent that came down on horseback to these parts, making pictures of the sea, and the boats, and the 'mushes,' though what he could find in the mushes to put into colour I can't say. And seems like he wanted to paint the island, or to shoot there, for he went over one day alone, and carried with him on his saddle a fowling-piece, along with his paintbox and his paper. He must have gone over by hisself early, because the flood, I know, made about ten that day. And he must have rode about in the mush and painted picters all that winter's day pretty near, starting to get back again at night. Well, there was a moon, and he'd find the other end of the passage quick enough; and having a strong horse, he'd think it an easy matter, don't ye see, to gallop back across the hard sand to the main; not knowing that the flood was doo at ten, and that the sea comes in, as ye know, underneath, afore it rolls in a-top."

"Hadn't anybody informed the poor man?" I asked.

"He never see nobody to inquire. 'Do, it 'ud a

been all right. He comes on to the flats, between them willow-sticks, and I dessay he takes it quiet at the beginning, being so sure of hisself and his horse. But by-me-by up drives, all of a sudden, one of our long-shore sea-fogs which blurs out the moon, and before he could get any bearings, being nothin' like half-way over, he misses the sticks, and goes here and there groping for the road."

"What should you have done yourself, then?" said I.

"Me! sir? You wouldn't catch nobody born about these here parts, crossing Foulness Crikk on a winter's night with a rising tide. But was I that gent, I should have got off and hunted for my own foot-marks, and then rid back to the mush as quick as I could. He didn't. He kept a searchin' for the road, till presently he notices that the sands is all alive and soaky, not being aweer before of the deadly natur' of the place. That makes him think he's a-going too fur seaward, so he turns back; but everywhere he finds the sands turning sloppy, and begins, I suppose, to hear the sob of the sea a-comin' in under the fog."

"A horrible position, skipper."

"Couldn't well be worse, sir, for anybody that didn't know the ropes—as they say. Well, he was wastin' the time away, and pretty soon in comes the first water of the flood, and the horse was soon over his fetlocks in it, snorting, poor thing! and scared; and the gent, by this while, more frightened than the beast."

"Well, and then?"

"Then he goes hither and thither, galloping up and down in the gathering water, that was, by this while, over his nag's knees; the birds screaming about him, the night as thick as wool, the dreadful sea pouring in with more and more vollum, for it was a' easterly wind outside, which allus makes a quick flood. A right bad job 'twas become, if you'll think of the unfortunate gentleman cavortin' about in the swelling tide, not knowing which way to turn his bridle, now and then plunging into a hole, and out again all wet and cold, and the horse screamin' and shudderin'."

"I don't see what chance there was left for the poor fellow."

"There wasn't no chance, sir, only in God A'mighty's mercy, and that's just what happened; for when the horse was beginning to give in, what with terror, and what with cold, and what with tearin' up and down, the easterly breeze comes over the flats and blows the fog away, just like a curtain rollin' up."

"Well, but even then, captain, it was up to the girths with them by this time, and no guide back to the lost road."

"'Twas so, sir! but, when the fog lifts, he looks and sees, quite away from where he was trying to go, a little bit of a twinkle, might be a mile, or half, or two miles off, he couldn't tell; nor he couldn't tell whether 'twas a boat's light, or a mush-glare, or what it was. But he makes for it, for a last chance,

spurring his horse, which catches sight of the gleam, too, and goes headlong through the sand and water, more like a porpoise a-rollin', I allow, than any shore-travellin' beast. And what with shoutin', and spurrin', and beatin' the horse with the brich of his

"A WOMAN ON HER KNEES BY HIS SIDE, WITH A BIBLE OPENED ON THE COVERLID."

gun, he gets him through the raffle of the tide till they comes to a willow-stick, and then another, and the sand begins to shallow under his hoofs and treads harder, and just when both of 'em was pretty nigh

done they draws out on to the dry, close under that cottage there, on the wall."

"What did he do?"

"Why, sir; he rides straight up to the light, which he sees now is a candle shining through a winder. And here's where me and the boat comes in, 'cause he opens the door, which was on the latch, and a'most falls into the room, and there he spies a dead man a-lyin' in a cot, and a woman on her knees by his side, with a Bible opened on the cover-lid, and she a tryin' to read words of comfort by the glimmer of the candle at the window."

"How strange! how sad! Who was the woman?"

"'Twas my own mother, sir! and that was my dead father what she was a watchin', and we boys was gone away to 'range with the neighbours about the buryin', seeing that he had been drowned in the wreck of his borley and washed ashore."

"I think I can guess the rest, skipper."

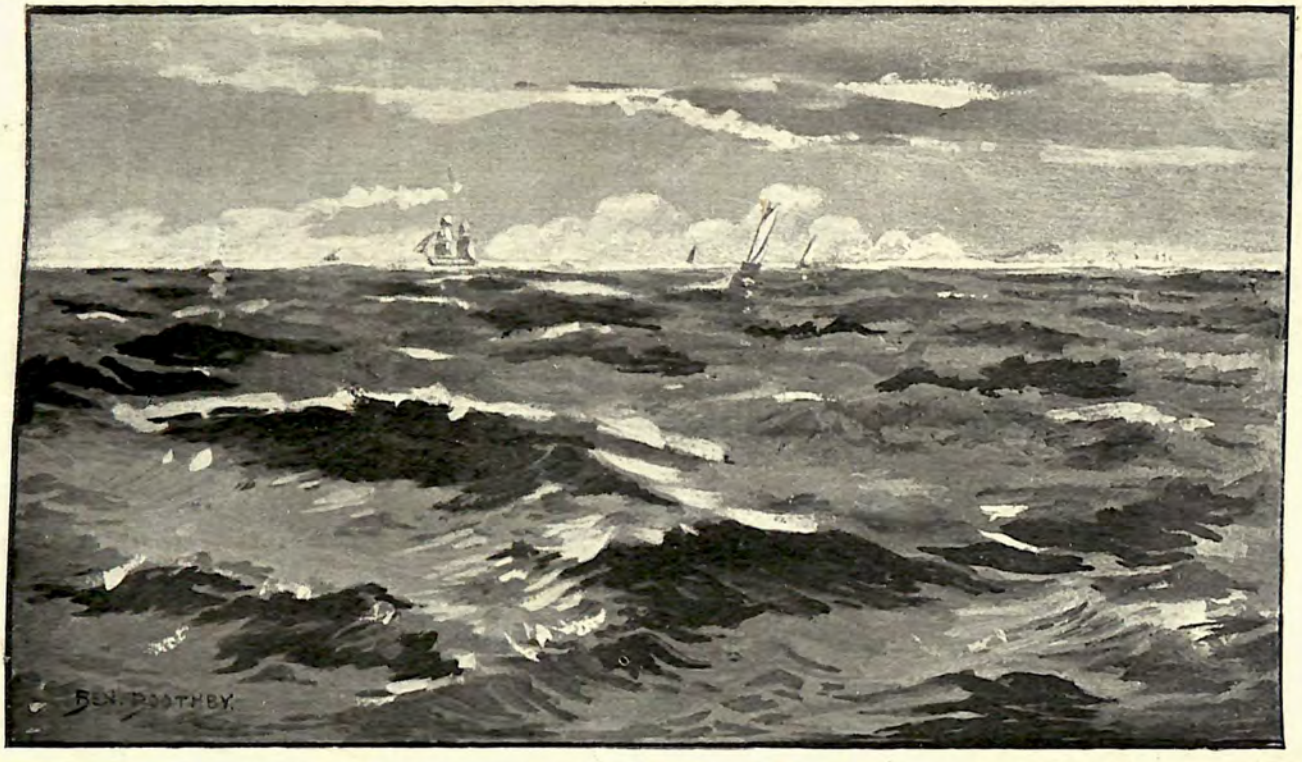
"No manner of doubt you can, sir. The dead had saved the living! The gent was very grateful-like about that candle and the reason of it; which had saved his life. And he behaved very handsome to mother—sending her bank-notes enough to build this 'ere wessel and fit her out. 'Only,' ses he, 'mind you cuts a Bible and a lighted candle somewheres or other upon the new boat.' And that's how the *Grateetood* come to have them carvings what you noticed."

Such recollections make one think kindly of the "stow-nets," and the "shove-nets," and all those

small folk of the sea, who used to ply in the mouths of Thames and Medway—and still ply, as I suppose. Very skilful in their way, very observant they are, and excellent boatmen in their own waters. Nor is their labour any little matter to the community. Of shrimps alone as much as two thousand gallons will sometimes be sent to London in a day from Leigh in Essex, and the annual take of those humble crustaceans round our coasts is worth at least £120,000. I used to admire—sitting in the shrimp-boat and trawling for *Crandon vulgaris*—a device which only deep study of the waters could have inspired. The difficulty is to catch the shrimps in the fragile net, and not also to catch the sea-slush, broken bottles, culch, and stones and weed which would break it and spoil the take. How would the naturalist ashore manage that? The simple fisherman, by observation, has solved the problem. He has noticed that, on the approach of danger, the shrimp always leaps upward about six inches from the sand where he crawls. Accordingly the shrimper leaves an open space between the lower edge of the net and the little ground beam, and all the shrimps hopping up are caught in the meshes, while the rubbish from the bottom passes harmlessly through the aperture.

XVII

DAYS AT SEA



"A DAY OF BLUE AND GOLD, LIGHTING UP AN EXPANSE OF FRESH AND FREE SEA-MEADOWS." *P.* 311.

XVII

DAYS AT SEA

If books, poetry, and journalism had not claimed me for their own, I should have been a sailor. Born by the waterside, and accustomed from earliest times to boats and shipping, I have always loved the sea and everything connected with it — so much so, that I can never, even now, keep long away from the sight and smell of the ocean, and am always full of secret and indefinable pleasure when I go on board a vessel for a visit or for a voyage. As a little lad, I could cut out a boat from a chunk of deal wood with any of my age, and rig it too, in a fairly correct manner, either as a cutter, yawl, or schooner—since types of all these craft were constantly passing before my eyes. Above all, her Majesty's Navy filled my thoughts with wonder, reverence, and loyalty. Living near two great dockyards, the ships of that navy, then of the grand old three-decker pattern—some of them still even paddle-wheels—grew deeply familiar to me, until I knew their names and looks much better than I knew those of my cousins and aunts. I read with eager admiration the stories of all our sea-fights, from the Armada down to Navarino, of which latter action an immensely big and, to my

eyes, superb painting was suspended in my father's dining-room, showing the *Asia* line-of-battle ship —Admiral Sir Edward Codrington—passing at the head of the British squadron down the ill-fated Turkish lines in a storm of thunderous artillery flashes and battle-smoke. Above all, I learned to adore the memory of Lord Nelson, whom I still faithfully consider to be the bravest, noblest, gentlest, and most perfect of all our British heroes. And this strong love of the sea, as well as of all connected with it, which has never yet quitted me, was fed by a small event in my boyish days, that came very near to being decisive as to my future career. My father, who was a man of large ideas, as well as of boundless kindness, had observed me very deeply absorbed in the perusal of an old book of travels called "The Adventures of Philip Quarles, Mariner." "If you so much like books of travel and adventure," he said, "to-morrow they shall bring you some." And the very next day his serving-man came into my room with a large washing-basket upon his shoulders full to the edge with huge folios and quartos. These old-fashioned volumes lent a special, almost a majestic, charm to reading. Unlike the many hastily-printed and flimsy productions of to-day, they were massive, large-typed, serious tomes, solemnly dedicated to "the King's most gracious Majesty," or to some imposing personage of the time, and embellished with quaint, elaborate plates, and amazing maps and diagrams. When "John" shot out that

precious cargo upon the carpet, I felt like the possessor of perfectly unlimited wealth. There were the two stately quartos of "Captain Cook's Voyages of Discovery;" there was "The Expedition of La Perouse;" piled up in golden wealth of joy and novelty before me were the Voyages of Dampier, of Anson, of Drake and Frobisher, Sir Walter Raleigh's Expeditions, the "Discovery of America by Christopher Columbus," and many others now clean forgotten. Most of them were too ponderous to handle for such childish strength as I had. I used to push them along the floor into a sunny corner, and there lie full length, my chin upon my hands, devouring the glorious particulars of these ancient seafarers.

Captain James Cook especially became enshrined in my admiration, as the worthy counterpart of Nelson. What courage! what resources! what seamanship! what unfailing humanity and equity in that noble Yorkshireman, destined to the splendid duty of opening up half the world to civilisation, and perishing so sadly at the hands of those island-people to whom he was so true a friend! In later years I used often to see one of his famous ships, the *Endeavour*, lying as a coal-hulk in the river Thames, and never passed her without the same profound feeling of reverence with which the sight of the grand old *Victory* in Portsmouth Harbour always to this hour fills me. Day after day I revelled in that rich feast of ocean adventure, and day after day wished

more and more, for myself also, to sail the sea and to cast eyes upon those fair and various lands, those strange peoples, those lovely islands set like jewels in the silver of the main, and shining under such glad and warm skies. Especially do I remember one prodigious volume which described some old worthy's travels in India, and which contained a plate that charged my imagination brim-full of wonder and interest. It represented a scene upon the Malabar coast, with the sea gently breaking along a sandy bay, the curve of which was fringed with cocoanut trees and tropical vegetation. Monkeys were climbing the stems of the palms, or perched in their frondage; and curiously shaped and coloured birds hovered over the edge of the waters or waded in the lagoons. It saturated me, that ancient picture, with the passion and the purpose to see India some day and to study the trees and flowers and birds and beasts and inhabitants of such a surprising country. All which has since duly befallen, for books are mighty in guiding and controlling us. I recall one hot, silent, memorable day in the Concan of India, when we came down from the hills where we had been shooting, to take passage in a *pattimar* for Bombay. We sate under the shade of some cocoa-palms by the edge of the rippling Indian Ocean. Where had I seen that beautiful, wild, quiet scene before? When had I before visited that sleeping, sunny bay of the Malabar shore, with its long curving lines of cocoanut

trees fringing the blue water, its milky wavelets breaking upon the golden sand, washing the shells, and star-fish, and clumps of bronze seaweed, and blood-red rocks? What made the spot, upon which I was certainly now for the first time planting my delighted feet, so impossibly familiar, so unreasonably known? I seemed to recognise every feature in the landscape and the seascape; the very boats fishing were such as I had viewed in the very same places, and the cut of the mat-sails on the trading barks, and the dress of the sailors and fishermen bore no new appearance. Puzzled and meditative, I was wondering if the Hindoo doctrine of former existences was indeed true, when my Mahratta shikari called out, "*Bandur lôk! dekkho, Saheb!*" "Look at the monkeys." Behind us, in a near clump of cocoa-palms, some of the four-handed folk were demurely ascending a tree full of nuts, and two of them were already ensconced in its crown plucking the green fruit. In a moment I remembered. It was the veritable scene depicted in that old book of travels! By accident—if anything in human life can so be called—my boy's dream and desire had come precisely true. There was the place before my eyes over which I had hung entranced in the nursery; it was the actual spot realised; if King George's artist had limned it by my side he could not have hit off that lovely nook of Malabar with happier precision.

But books hold so much more in them than geography and maritime adventures, that when I

went wider and deeper into the world of them I was lost to the sea. To this day I half regret my early and too eager studiousness. I might have been captain of an Indiaman or a Cunarder, or possibly of an ironclad—perhaps even an Admiral! To this day there seems to me no post so splendid, so honourable, so utterly satisfying to the heart of a loyal Englishman, as to walk a quarter-deck, bearing the Queen's commission, under the glorious flutter of the White Ensign. But the books—the marvellous, absorbing books—led me inland farther and farther away from those early and happy visions of Anson chasing the galleons, Cook picking up the jewelled islands, Columbus and Raleigh sailing to find new worlds, and Nelson's genius making England great and safe. I read too much. I was over-successful—I should say to-day sadly successful—except for the beautiful poetry of Homer and Virgil, of Shakespeare and Keats and Shelley, of Ariosto and Tasso, of Calderon and Camoens, of Hafiz and Sadi, and the dark wisdom of the Sanskrit Upanishads and the Mahabharata, which came afterwards, and are more mighty and delightful than even the ocean. I gained an important scholarship at my school, and was, therefore, marked off for Oxford and a literary life—*sic visum Deis!*

But the salt has always been a little in my blood, and whenever I could, in a life without much leisure, I have always gone back to play with the sea. If I come anywhere near it at any time, something of the crab in me makes me sidle away

from fashion and land pursuits to the handiest quay or harbour wall. My one and chief objection to London—which otherwise is to my mind the dearest old foggy, muddy, dingy city on the globe, as well as the biggest and the grandest—consists in the inconvenient fact that King Lud planted it too far from any green water. I have generally, however, managed to own and use a craft of some sort. First it was the *Star of the Sea*, a little 2½-tonner, which was, nevertheless, "all boat," and made her way in her time from the Thames to the Land's End. Then it was the *Catharine*, of 12 tons, on board of which, with good old Harry Pocock, the Upnor fisherman, we took much pains to get drowned, but unsuccessfully. Then came the *Fannie*, a cutter of 19 tons, in which, with a friend, Sir Thomas Miller, a born seaman, albeit a Scotch Baronet, I learned the East Coast almost as thoroughly as any collierman; and afterwards the schooner yacht *Hadassah*, of 120 tons, which used to take us on charming cruises to the Scilly Islands, to Guernsey and Jersey, and up and down the Channel; and the yawl yacht *Harelda* of 80 tons. Yachting is a noble pastime, whether you race or cruise, and all the more so because it is unconnected with the pain or destruction of any beautiful and happy living creatures. Avast heaving, though! Yes, we used to trawl, it must be avowed; and many a time have I myself helped—up to the knees in slush—to haul the "purse" of the great ground-net on board, and see it gush forth upon the planks with an avalanche of soles, skates,

dabs, flounders, tom-cods, lobsters, crabs, oyster-shells, star-fish, broken bottles, dead men's fingers, jelly-fish, seaweed, stones, and oozy mess unspeakable.

It comes as near, perhaps, to faultless physical happiness as earth can bring, to sail, under fair weather and with pleasant company, in such a little ship as the *Hadassah*, and on such brief but sufficient voyages as the Channel in summer-time permits. I hate bad weather at sea. If you meet it, it must be faced; but the sea in her bitter and dangerous moods is horrible, ugly, infamous, treacherous, deadly, detestable. North and south of latitude 32 degrees, the ocean is indeed never to be trusted; inside these parallels alone you almost always get such weather and such waters as the best days of our British summers but partly suggest. Many of those "best days" do I recall with gratitude and lasting pleasure. Sail over-night, for instance, or in the very early morning, from Dartmouth for Guernsey, keeping a sharp look-out in the first twenty miles of open water for the coasting steamers, which will run you down if they can. Then, let the morning break over the Channel, as it often will in July and August, a day of blue and gold, lighting up an expanse of fresh and free sea-meadows, ploughed into shallow furrows of silver and green by the share of a north-easterly breeze, free on your quarter. No land is in sight, but a line of fishing-smacks astern marks the limits of the trawling-water, and the mid-Channel will be diversified with more than one sailing-ship and with steamers trailing their

flags of smoke across the sky. You have breakfasted with a sailor's appetite, and the easy heave of the water, running long with the wind over an ebbing tide, lulls you in your deck-chair into peace with yourself and all the world. Forget that in the wild winter-time this very passage of the sea can be a hell of angry waves and cruel weather, the tides secretly dragging the ship into peril, the fierce billows leaping up to wash her seamen to their watery graves, the clouds and mist blotting out the sight of land and the pleasant lights of home from their gaze. To-day it is a heaven of peace and bright circumstance, the little ship seeming really to live, with her white wings and white deck, as the green milky-crested rollers leap up at her bow, and the sea-lace weaves and unweaves itself in fathom-breadths on the broken faces of the waves in her wake. If you will not steer her yourself—and what, after all, is horse-riding or bicycling to the holding of the tiller of a lively, answerable, well-trimmed yacht!—repose under the shadow of the ivory-textured mainsail and read, while the wind fans you and the waters lull. Read the Odyssey in the glorious Greek; it is the best book in the world to take yachting, and suits all the seas. Or, if you do not read Homer in the only way in which he should be enjoyed, then don't waste your splendid hours upon a trashy novel or some scandal-loving society paper, but open one of the noble sea-poems in prose of Mr. Clark Russell—of which he has given so many and such admirable examples to his

time—and, while you hang over his perfect pages of manly adventure and maritime romance, you shall have the great sea interpreted to you by one of the very few who know its mysteries and its majesties; you shall enjoy the subtlest of all intellectual delights —that is to say, the translation of Nature into a living thing by the magic of genius; and you shall be gratefully aware that England, to whom the ocean belongs, has found a Marryat of the Red Ensign in these latter days to keep up in all our hearts the love which we must never lose for the "Great Green Mother."

Somehow or other I have in a desultory and occasional manner managed to sail or steam in almost all the seas north of the Equator. I have crossed the Pacific from continent to continent three times, the Indian Seas many times, the Black Sea, the Baltic Sea, the Ægean, Adriatic, North Sea, China Sea, Bay of Bengal, Atlantic, Bay of Biscay, and every nook and corner of the Mediterranean. One cannot accumulate even such a mere landsman's small experience and not have witnessed some rather bad weather; and, indeed, I myself have witnessed boats washed away and decks swept, bulwarks smashed and davits twisted, ships battened down and canvas torn cracking from its bolt-ropes, and have been even wrecked by the capsizing of my own craft. I have been on board a steamer afire at sea, 900 miles from the nearest land, and stood by while the honest fellows who fought the flames were dragged suffocating from the crackling hold.

So I dread as well as love the wonderful waters, which hold death in a hundred forms, as well as life in its most lovely and perfect combinations and conditions, within those kissing circles of dark blue sea and light blue sky that make the mariner's home. Nevertheless, I have a secret conviction, which I would not like to utter when afloat, that the grandeur and majesty of the ocean are vastly exaggerated. Waves "mountains high" are myths. The sea can, no doubt, swamp the biggest vessel that was ever launched—and will, if you allow it—but the means by which she does this are brutal and clumsy rather than colossal or imposing. I have watched the Bay of Biscay slop itself, green and grey, in a solid mass across the deck of a great liner, but it was, after all, only a "slop," though it lifted boats out of their chocks, and washed the waist clear. There was plenty of misery and mess in it, but, to my thinking, very little sublimity. Similarly, the largest rollers of the Atlantic always appeared to me too ugly, and low, and monotonous for praise or admiration, though one must confess and respect their power of dull mischief. It is the summer sea one loves—the sea in its obedience to man, and not in its rebellion; the Greek sea; the sea as Aphrodite rose from it—joyous, pearly, and benign; the sea such as it sweeps and sparkles through the clusters of the South Pacific, under the palms of Malabar, and along the yellow sands of Ceylon and Singapore; or even sometimes beneath the red hills of the Riviera, and among the island

groups of the Levantine Archipelago. Therefore I well know I shall go down to it again and again while I live; and so must every Englishman who has once felt the meaning of the music in the hollow of an ocean-shell, and once taken into his veins the spell and magic of the "cool blue wine of the seas."

XVIII

ORIENTAL STORY-TELLERS

XVIII

ORIENTAL STORY-TELLERS

I SOMETIMES wonder that, among the many new forms of public entertainment in this and other European countries, nobody has thought of introducing from the East the good old profession of story-teller. Of course I do not allude to any branch of the science of saying "the thing which is not." That is practised with quite sufficient frequency and ease in the West as well as the East; and, indeed, the generally prevailing idea that Orientals are a less truthful race than Occidentals might be combated with many remarkable facts to the contrary. The "story-telling" of which I am thinking is that charming ancient art of spoken fiction which has for many centuries, it may be for thousands of years, taken the place of our novel. Not many people in the East can read at all fluently even to-day, and in bygone times the number of literates was naturally fewer, so that the masses were shut off from knowledge of their sacred writings, and from all that wealth of fanciful and fabulous literature which in the shape of manuscript made the mediæval Orient so rich. There were the traditional tales and legends, of course, passed along from tongue to tongue, which everybody knew; but it is only children who like

to hear the same stories over and over again, and besides, the glory of a story for Eastern minds is in its detail, which gets rubbed off by the friction of many years and many mouths. Consequently, the professional story-teller of the Eastern World arose, who had read, or had caught from the lips of good readers, the exact form in which the piety or genius of his World had embodied its ideas, traditional, philosophic, historical, or fantastic. In many countries he survives to this day—not only a public delight and pastime, but an educational necessity in his way, serving the purpose of a circulating library, condensed into one energetic and retentive memory. Why should we not profit by the example? A striking story, well narrated, with proper methods, tact, and taste, is a very fascinating form of public pleasure, and in India, Japan, Egypt, and Arabia has become quite an indispensable one. An initial difficulty would occur, no doubt, in the fact that, as everybody on our side of the earth reads, stories perfectly unknown to the audience would be hard to select. Another would arise from the circumstance that the reciters of the East permit themselves a range of subjects and a freedom of language which, while immensely enhancing the piquancy and amusing nature of their entertainments, would be swiftly suppressed by our Lord Chamberlain, and, indeed, forbidden by public propriety. They are very candid in the East, and talk plainly about many simple and natural things which Western prudery never permits to be even mentioned, though in many

respects this is a modern squeamishness with us, as anybody may see who studies Chaucer and Shakespeare; and does not necessarily lead to better manners and morals.

We could not publicly put up, of course, even from Chaucer, with certain of the brilliant and witty stories of the Canterbury Tales, and we probably do not possess many, or any, performers of such genius in fiction that—like the *Hanashika* of Japan, or the wandering *Byrajis* of India—they could go on for hours spinning perfectly original tales out of their heads, to an entranced circle of all ages and both sexes. But a qualified hand might provide himself with a rich and varied repertoire, and thereby charm thousands with this neglected yet delightful Art; for who can deny that a fresh and well-told story would be ever so much more attractive than dull recitations and tedious readings, where almost everybody knows what is coming? Music might be pressed very advantageously into the service of the performance, with appropriate costume, and, perhaps, a little suitable scenery. At all events, it is an idea, a suggestion towards that urgent reform—far more desirable than anything connected with parish councils and parish pumps—the increase and amelioration, I mean, of the amusements of the people.

The *Hanashika*, or story-teller of Japan, is a highly popular personage in town and country, who, possessing a good voice and tuneful ear, and being primed full of the legends and records which best suit native

taste, gives his primitive, but very alluring, entertainments in one spot after another, as he trudges along the Tokaido, or any other main road of the empire. The general place for the performances is a large upper room over the principal shop of the village street. In front of the entrance will be planted bamboo flagstaffs, with dark-blue banners laced vertically to them, bearing the name of the performer, and perhaps the titles of some of the tales or songs which he proposes to offer. During the day an assistant will perambulate the village beating a drum and blowing a horn, after which he proclaims at every corner the eminent gifts of his *sensei*, and invites the public to be present. At evening you go with the crowd, dropping off shoes or slippers at the foot of the polished ladder leading to the *yose*, as the hall of entertainment is called. You may enter for the modest price of four *sen*, or twopence; after which, if desirous to be ranked with the "quality," an additional payment of ten *sen*, or fivepence, will give you a right to the very best situation upon the mats, and to a cushion on the floor, as well as a tobacco-box and teapot, with perhaps a fan. The narrator sits cross-legged before a low desk, *tsukue*, holding in his left hand a fan, or bamboo paper-knife, with which he beats energetically upon his desk at the critical passages of his story. The company listen, with the admirable patience and politeness of the race; and, if at all bored, smoke extra pipes and drink incessant tea. Generally they are very much amused, and that too by the simplest

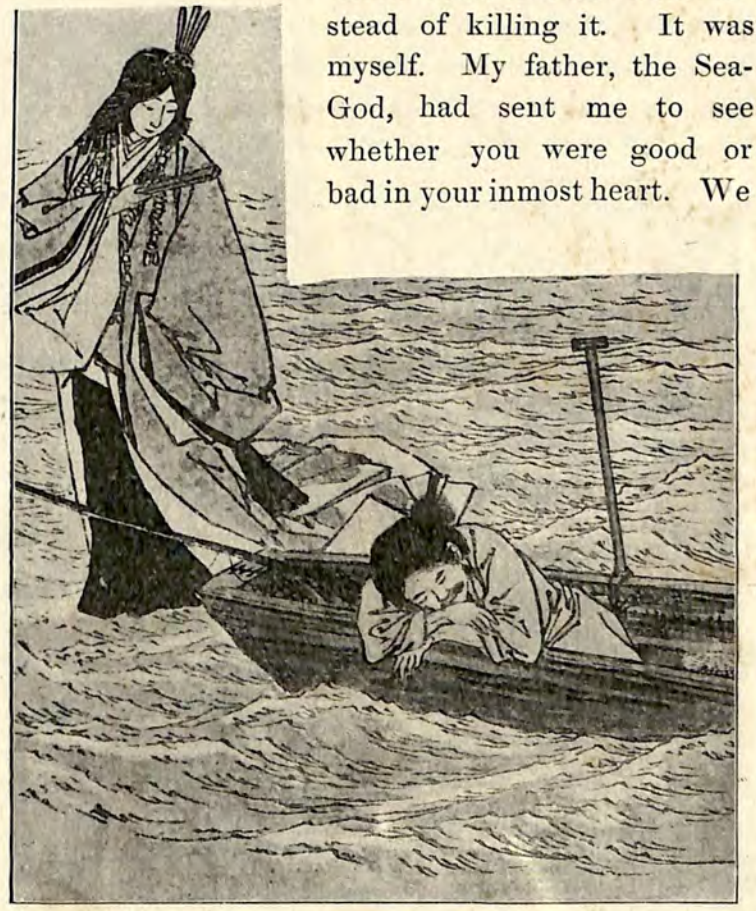
stories, for the reciter intersperses his prose with vivid gestures, snatches of singing, and ejaculations that wake up the sleepiest; while, if there be many children present, he will perhaps narrate one of the old fairy-tales of Japan, which everybody loves, like this, which Mrs. James so well translated, of the fisher-boy who married the princess.

THE FISHER-BOY URASHIMA.

Long ago there lived, on the coast of the sea of Japan, a young fisherman named Urashima, a kindly lad and clever with his net and line. One day he went out in his boat to fish. But instead of catching any fish, he caught a big tortoise, with a hard shell, a wrinkled ugly face, and a foolish tail. Tortoises always live a thousand years—at least Japanese tortoises do. So Urashima thought to himself: "A fish would do for my dinner just as well as this tortoise; in point of fact, better. Why should I kill the poor thing, and prevent it from enjoying itself for another 999 years? No, no! I won't be so cruel." And with these words, he threw the tortoise back into the sea. The next incident that happened was that Urashima went to sleep in his boat, for it was one of those hot summer days when the sea rocks its children to slumber. And, as he slept, there came up from beneath the waves a beautiful girl, who climbed into the boat and said, "I am the daughter of the Sea-God, and I live with my father in the

URASHIMA RELEASES THE TORTOISE.

Dragon Palace beyond the waves. It was not a tortoise that you caught just now, and so kindly threw back into the water instead of killing it. It was myself. My father, the Sea-God, had sent me to see whether you were good or bad in your inmost heart. We



THE TORTOISE REAPPEARS AS THE PRINCESS OF THE SEA.

now know that you are good and kind, and do not like to do cruel things; and so I have come to fetch you. You shall marry me, if you please; and we

will live happily together for a thousand years in the Dragon Palace beyond the deep blue sea." So Urashima took one oar, and the Sea-God's daughter took the other, and they rowed till at last they came to the Dragon Palace where the Sea-God lived, and ruled as king over all the dragons and tortoises and

THE PRINCESS AND URASHIMA ROW TO THE FAIRY ISLANDS.

crabs and fishes. The walls of the palace were of coral, the trees had emeralds for leaves and rubies for berries, the fishes' scales were of silver, and the dragons' tails of solid gold. All the most beautiful glittering things that have ever been seen met together there, and the liveliest imagination will never

picture what this palace looked like. It all belonged to Urashima. Here they lived very happily for countless years, wandering about every day among the beautiful trees with emerald leaves and ruby

THEY ARE RECEIVED BY THE FISH-PEOPLE.

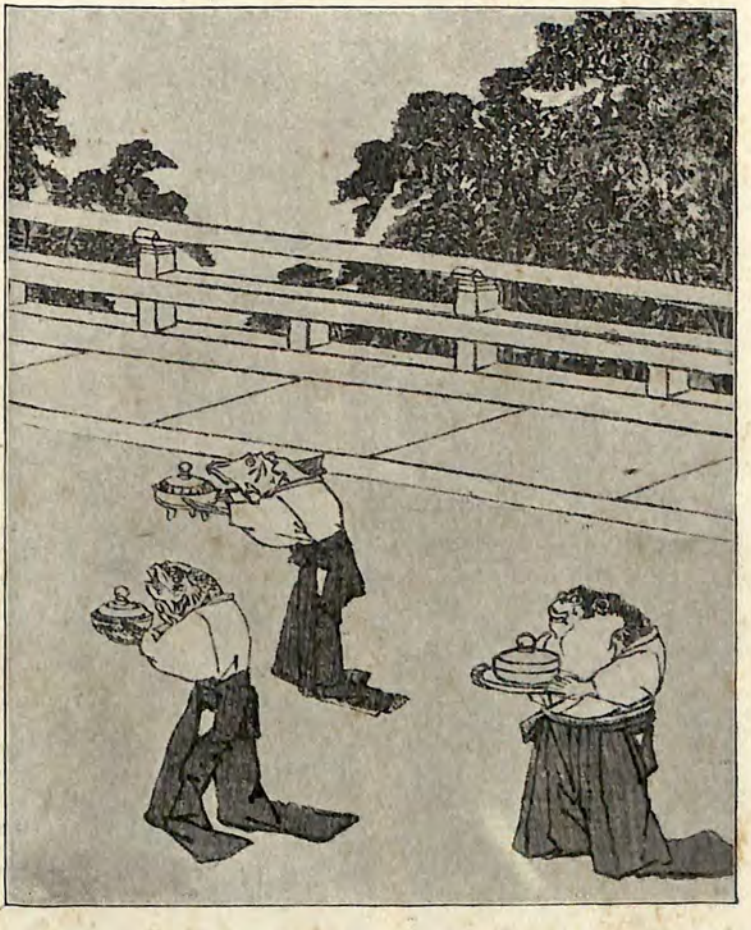
berries. But one morning Urashima said to his wife, "I am quite happy with you, delightful one! Still I want to go home and see my father and

mother and brothers and sisters. Permit me to depart for a short time, and, by the truth of my love, I will soon be back again." "I don't like you to go,"

PALACE OF THE SEA-QUEEN.

said she; "I am very much afraid that something dreadful will happen. However if you will go, there is no help for it; only you must take this box, which

will protect you, on condition that you are very careful not to open it. When you open it you will never be



SERVANTS OF THE PALACE.

able to come back here." So Urashima promised to take great care of the box and not to open it on any account; and then, getting into his boat, he rowed

URASHIMA AND THE PRINCESS AT HOME.

off, and at last landed on the shore of his own country.

But much had happened while he had been away. Whither had his father's cottage gone? What had become of the village where he used to

THE GIFT OF THE BOX.

live? The mountains indeed were there as before, but the trees on them had been cut down. The little brook that ran close by his father's cottage was still running; but there were no women washing clothes in it any more. It seemed very strange that

everything should have changed so much in three short years. Just then two men chanced to pass along the beach, and Urashima went up to them and said, "Can you tell me, if you please, to what spot

URASHIMA BACK IN HIS NATIVE VILLAGE.

Urashima's cottage, which used to stand here, has been moved?" "Urashima?" said they; "why, it is 400 years ago since he was drowned, out fishing. His parents, and his brothers, and their great-great-grandchildren are all dead long ago. It is an old,

very old story. How can you be so foolish as to ask after his cottage? It fell to pieces hundreds of years ago."

Then it suddenly flashed across Urashima's mind that the Sea-God's palace beyond the waves, with its coral walls and its ruby fruits and its dragons with tails of solid gold, must be part of fairyland, and that one day in that land was probably as long as a year in this world, so that his swift years in the Sea-God's palace had really endured for hundreds of years. Of course, there was no use in staying at home, now that all his friends were dead and buried, and even the village had passed away. So Urashima was in a great hurry to get back to his wife, the Dragon Princess, beyond the sea. But which was the way? He could not find it without any one to show it to him. "Perhaps," thought he, "if I open the box which she gave me I shall be able to learn the road." So he disobeyed her orders not to open the box—or, possibly, he forgot them. Anyhow, he opened the box, and out of it came—what?

Here the fan of our story-teller would furiously beat the desk.

Nothing but a white cloud which floated away over the sea! Urashima shouted to the cloud to stop, rushed about and screamed with sorrow; for he remembered now what his wife had told him, and how, after opening the box, he should never be able to go to the Sea-God's palace again. But soon he could neither run nor shout any more. Suddenly his hair grew as white as snow, his face got wrinkled,

and his back bent like that of a very old man. Then his breath stopped short, and he fell down dead on the beach! Ah, *Zannen! Zannen!* Woe for Urashima! He died because he had been foolish and disobedient. If only he had done as he was told, he might have lived another thousand years. If we could only go and see the Dragon Palace beyond the waves, where the Sea-God lives and rules as king over the dragons and the tortoises and the fishes, where the trees have emeralds for leaves and rubies for berries, where the fishes' tails are of silver and the dragons' tails all of solid gold—never would we open that stupid box. No! *Anata-kata! Ne?*

In Egypt, Persia, Syria, and Arabia the *cafés* are the chief places to see and hear the professional story-teller, who is long-winded, noisy, and indecorous, but very clever and very various. If he be a favourite, the evening hour will bring great profit to the *cafedji*, and many piastres or *krauns* to his own girdle; while, when he has finished a thrilling adventure, or come to a full stop, everybody near at hand will reach out the mouthpiece of *narghileh* or *kallian* to him, that he may draw solace and refreshment from the reposeful herb. At portions of his legend, too wild for credence, he will piously disarm scepticism by ejaculating, "And Allah, who is All-wise, alone knoweth the truth," while sometimes, when he arrives at a particularly exciting moment of his plot, and all the customers are hanging upon the fate of his dark-eyed heroine, he will abruptly break

off with, *Fi Aman' Illah* ("God have you all in His grace!"), and bow his way out of the coffee-house, sufficiently assured that everybody must come again to-morrow to hear how the story ends.

In Egypt many a tale from the "Thousand and One Nights" is still almost textually reproduced. In Persia the *Mahbûb-u-Kuloob*, or "Heart's Delight," the "Book of Sindibad," the *Shumsah*, and such-like literature, are largely drawn upon; but the professionals have their own repertoire, and often affect a flowery metaphorical style, largely borrowed from the old fantastic Persian romances. There is an admirable translation from the *Shumsah* by Mr. Rehatsek which exemplifies very well this elaborate and artificial manner of the story-teller in Shiraz and Ispahan. It is the opening of the "Tale of the Three Wise Women," who are thus described:—

"Once upon a time there were three whales of the sea of fraud and deceit; three dragons of the force of thunder and the quickness of lightning; three defamers of honour and reputation, namely, three men-deceiving, lascivious women, each of whom had from the chancery of her cunning issued the mandate of turmoil to a hundred cities and countries, and in the arts of fraud they accounted Eblis as an admiring spectator in the theatre of their stratagems. One of them was sitting in the court of justice of the Kazi's embrace; the second was the precious gem of the bazaar-master's diadem of compliance; and the third was the bezel and ornament of the signet-ring of the life and soul of the superintendent of police. They

were constantly entrapping the deer of the field of deceit with the net of cunning; and plundered the caravan of heart-tranquillity of strangers and acquaintances by means of the edge of the scimitar of fraud. One day this triplicate of roguery met at the public bath, and, according to their nature, they entered the basin of argument. After a while, when they had brought the pot of concord to boil by the fire of mutual laudation, they tempered the bath of association with the breeze of kindness, and came out. In the dressing-room all three of them happened simultaneously to observe a ring, the gem of which surpassed the imagination of the jeweller of destiny, and the like of which had never been beheld in the storehouse of possibility."

Afterwards the reciter proceeds to tell how the ring was to be the prize of the one among the three wives who should most cleverly deceive her husband—for it is the settled maxim of most of these Oriental excursions of fancy and romance that

> Never wearies death of slaying;
> Nor the seas of drinking rivers; nor the bright-eyed
> of betraying.

The bazaar-master's wife is particularly audacious and successful in her trick upon her lord. There is a household diversion in Persia much resembling our "Philippina," where, if you accept any gift without first pronouncing the safeguarding word, you are made ridiculous and must pay a forfeit. The wife of the bazaar-master invites her would-be lover,

the son of a banker, to put on a woman's veil and come to a feast at her house. On his arrival, she takes him into the inner apartment, speaks loving words to him, and tells him to remain comfortably there until she shall have returned, bringing with her requisite refreshments. She then leaves him, and instructs one of her female attendants to cause it to arrive to the ears of the bazaar-master that his wife has brought a strange man to the house. This being done, she returns to her lover, and is engaged in talking to him when she hears her husband approaching. The young man is dreadfully alarmed, the lady opens a chest and says, "Conceal yourself in this box until I see what will come of this affair." Accordingly she locks up the young man, and then goes to meet her husband, to whom she pretends to confess all; and finally presents him with the key of the box, which the husband accepts from her hand. The lady hereupon bursts out laughing, and exclaims, "I remember, but you forget. Give me a present." The husband, disgusted at losing the Persian "Philippina," and thinking it a joke of his wife, throws back the key of the chest, pays his forfeit, and quits the house in a huff, leaving the crafty dame at ease with her lover.

In India it is principally the wandering mendicants and *joshi* who follow this ancient profession; and the tales which they find most popular are antique passages of war and miracle, of wild religious legend and Aryan chivalry, drawn from such inexhaustible sources as the Ramâyana and the Mahâbhârata. It

is characteristic of the serious genius and philosophic tastes natural even to the peasantry of India that all the people of a village—women and men, girls and boys alike—will sit in hushed and attentive circles round the half-naked Brahman, hearing him interpret to them from the old-world Sanskrit text of those immense and extraordinary poems the majestic, if often grotesque, fictions of Hindoo fancy. Nala and Damayanti; the tale of Savitri who begged her husband's soul back from the God of Death; or of young Rishyasringha, who had never looked upon a woman's face; or of the "Great Journey;" or of the "Entry into Heaven," such things—far too grave and earnest for Paris, or Shiraz, or Constantinople, or London—will keep the placid Hindu folks squatted all night at the *mandala*, insatiable to hear of the greater and the lesser gods, and of the holy saints, and of the glorious bygone kings of the land; of the jewelled snake-people, the magicians, the Asuras, and the great Bird Garúda, who carries off mountains. Why should we, of the West, so totally neglect this branch of the divine art of fiction? There is a whole wide field of popular pleasure and instruction open to duly-qualified entertainers who would take up amongst us the forgotten but fascinating profession of Story-telling.

XIX

A GENTLE MURDERESS

"MINA-MINA'S KNIFE WAS PLUNGED WITH ALL THE WEIGHT OF HER LIFTED BODY INTO THE SHARK'S SIDE." *P.* 347.

XIX

A GENTLE MURDERESS

THIS is only a little story! I picked it up upon the beach of Oahu, among the fishing-huts under Diamond Head; in those beautiful Sandwich Islands, where a set of commercial and political sugar-filibusters have temporarily taken away her crown from the rightful sovereign, Queen Lilioukalani. I shall tell the story imperfectly, knowing so little as I do about the locality and the language, but I asked three or four questions afterwards as to the Hawaiian words and phrases, and what follows is, as far as I can remember, the manner in which it was related.

They are wonderful swimmers in the Sandwich Islands, as in almost all those clusters of the Pacific archipelagoes; and no finer sight can be for such as love healthy manhood than to watch the amphibious people play with the sea. It is as much their home as the land. Fishing is quite as important to them as agriculture, and they all know the ways and the whereabouts of the creatures of the deep and of the reef, as well as those of the birds of the grove and mountain-slope. With nets of the *olona* fibre and sweep-ropes of *ki* leaves, they draw the countless variegated finny tribes into the shallows of the lagoon and out upon the sands, and have a trick—

where it is permitted—of placing under heavy stones beneath the water the bruised roots of a plant—the *auhuhu*—which intoxicates every fish coming within the influence of its juice. Excellent boatmen, in spite of the primitive character of the native canoes, they make adventurous runs from island to island, and are especially skilful in handling a little craft in the midst of surf or great breaking billows. It is a treat to see a Hawaiian canoe coming ashore, with or without the *ama*, an outrigger of light wood which steadies the frail craft. The sea-birds skimming over the rollers do not seem more at home in the middle of the huge Pacific surf than the brown-skinned Kanakas paddling to land from a fishing or sailing excursion in the evening. They understand the tricks and dangers of the coral barrier which they must cross, and take the enormous wave which rolls over it with shouts of excitement and delight. If they are capsized, it is nothing to them so long as no sharks are about. They really make the white and blue breakers their play-fellows in their popular sport of *hee nalu*, or surf-swimming, where a party of these laughing water-babies of all ages, naked except for a wreath of sea-weed, or a wisp of bark-cloth, will go down to the reef's edge at sunset, carrying long light boards of koa-wood, eight feet long and eighteen inches broad, stained black, and highly polished. Clasping these, they swim boldly out to seaward, diving, plank and all, under each incoming roller as they meet it, until they have gone as far out as where the ocean feels the first of

the coral bottom, and swells for its outer line of long billow. Then, turning their faces shoreward, they lie down flat upon the plank, balancing themselves upon it and holding it with feet and hands straight along the glassy back of the great roller, which foams, curls, leaps, and thunders under them as they tear along, tossed like bubbles amid the milky spume and the whirling sea-lace, until they come drenched and shining to the shore, or into the placid green water inside the reef. The very babies learn to swim almost before they are able to toddle; and as for the grown boys and girls of the islands, and its men and women, the waves are as much their playground as the woods and meadows, and there are instances where Hawaiians have been thirty hours in the sea after a capsize, and have yet come safely to land.

But one must be strong, and well, and unencumbered for these long swims, and a sick man cannot sport with the ocean in such a fearless way; which is why Mina-Mina lost her first-born, and bought with his little life her husband's safety. We passed her, walking with a string of fish, and a tiny child upon her arms, under the palm-trees near Leahi, and my friend—an old resident—gave her good-day in the musical Hawaiian, calling her by the name I have mentioned.

"What a pretty word that is," I said, "to call a woman by! What does it mean?"

"Oh," he answered, "that's not her right name, but one which the neighbours have given her ever

since a sad adventure that she met with off Koko Head, round yonder. Mi-na-mi-na signifies 'regret for the memory of anything,' 'sadness,' 'something precious that is gone,' 'sorry to lose.' She is a good and brave girl, and she has got another baby now to play with, but she can never forget the boy she was obliged to leave to the sharks in the bad time."

Of course I asked him for the story, and this is how he told it:—

One day in the season of the change of weather, Mina-Mina, with her husband, and their little boy of about a year-and-a-half old, had gone in a canoe over to Molokai to fetch ironwood and shells. The man was weak and ill with fever, though recovering; but the wife, like most of these Hawaiian women, could handle a paddle with the best, and Mauae, her young partner, was quite strong enough to take his part in loading the craft and steering her. So they were making the voyage homewards under the little sail of mat spread on the bamboo mast, with the red bird painted upon it, and Mina-Mina was suckling her son of eighteen months forward, while her husband directed the boat; and all had gone safely up to about midway in the broad channel. Perhaps he was singing her an *ipo*, a love-verse—for the people are like birds, and are always chirruping; or she, perhaps, was cooing a sleep-song to her small son, in the dove's voice, which the island-mothers have. But, all in a moment, one of those circular gusts that sweep the sea at the change of

weather, came upon them without warning out of the clear sky and over the smooth surface. He was languid and slow with his fever; she was engaged with her child, and had no time to let the sail fall or to fling overboard the heavy stuff in the bottom of the canoe. The gust forced the gunwale of it under, though they both leaned well to windward, and although Mina-Mina reached over and cut the halliards with her knife. In a moment the little craft filled and sank from under them, drawn down by its load, leaving the three floating on the agitated sea, with only one paddle, which Mauae held. Mina-Mina had swung her baby over to her back, and his little round head, like a cocoanut, peeped well forth from the water as his mother struck out by the side of her husband for the shore under Koko Head.

Although this lay fully two leagues away, there was nothing in the situation greatly to disconcert an Hawaiian family. If only the young husband had been in his proper strength, he would have shifted the baby to his own shoulders, and side by side, while the sea grew quiet again, they would have managed to make their long swim to the land, supposing no shark intercepted them. For any one less familiar with the open ocean than these islanders no doubt it would have seemed a dreadful plight. Even from a boat the wide and naked face of the sea appears terrible in its spread and flatness. The long, huge, ponderous swell of it, which you did not notice from the deck of a ship or steamer, gives a new and awful impression of its elemental weight

and bulk. In the very quietest weather there is a throb of solid motion in the shining surface, which drops a small boat into vast, shallow valleys, and again lifts it upon the breast of gradual but far-reaching slopes, so that the actual peace of the sleeping element becomes dreadful. But when a swimmer beats the salt sea, far from land or help, his chin upon its shining top, his eyes just level with the long glitter of the sea-floor, the vastness and bareness and deadliness of it become to all but the hardiest absolutely terrible. There is no man who, swimming in the ocean, has not experienced, even when he had safety close at hand, that irresistible horror at the littleness of his powers and at the largeness of the chilly death lapping and washing all around him, before and behind, on the right and the left, as far away on every quarter as to where the sky comes down to the sea. And it is worse when he thinks of the deep abyss of liquid beneath his feeble feet—although, for the matter of that, seven feet of water will choke the life from a wearied swimmer as well as the four thousand fathoms of the mid-Pacific. Actual death by drowning is, probably, like most other forms of dying, not at all painful; but never does death appear more visible and dreadful than when you look along the face of the sea, struggling with its waters for every breath that is drawn and every yard that is won, while the dance of the brine washes over the lips and nostrils, and flings its bitter menace into the blinded eyes.

Mina-Mina soon found that her man could not keep the baby's head and his own at the same time above the water. The little brown imp was, nevertheless, laughing and crowing at the sparkling waves, without any mark of fear or tremble, and when she drew him down beside her in the sea, and let him paddle for a cable's length or so, the tiny castaway swam like a small fish, and all three were making fair progress. In the moment of the capsize they had fallen into the sea, of course fully clothed, but both had since loosened and cast aside in the water their garments of tapa for freer swimming, although Mina-Mina still retained her waist-band, in which she kept her fishing-knife. The ocean was quieting down again after the sudden blast, and it was not difficult to rest sometimes by floating, the wife holding up their small companion. Only this would not do for any long time together, because a current was running before the light trade wind, and they might drift too far to reach the land at last.

Presently Mina-Mina's bright eyes perceive upon the water to the right—on her husband's side—a dark edge, moving slowly, like a blade of black seaweed tilted up.

"Oh! Mokuhalii! (great God of the Fish), help us now," she cried. "*He kokua!* help! here is *he mano*, the shark."

"Your *aumakua** is the great fish," said Mauae.

* Tutelar ancestor. The natives still believe that the spirits of their relations enter special animals, which become the *totem* accordingly of particular families.

"He will not hurt *you*, wife, but he will take me or the little one."

Being of the Fish-God's line, she was indeed *tabu* to sharks, and they to her, and to injure the tyrant of the deep was forbidden to her, for there is plenty of ancient belief still among the islanders, in spite of missionaries. But now she was thinking only of her husband and her baby, and superstition fled to the winds for the dear sake of those she loved. Of all examples of similar religious courage in Hawaiian women, none is better known than that of Kapiolani, the daughter of the chief of Hilo, who broke the spell of Pelë, the Guardian of the great Volcano, eating the sacred berries of the dreaded goddess, and flinging stones into the seething fiery crater of Mauna Loa, thereby converting the people from their antique fears. But "that is another story."

"Beat hard upon the water, *He Luna!* Master! Beat when he comes near, and keep him a little off. I will kill my *aumakua!* Otherwise will he eat my precious son."

At any other moment these words would have seemed too impious to hear or pronounce. Now, however, the enfeebled and weary husband could only sign silent assent, and put his elbow under the child's arm, while Mina-Mina drew her knife from her belt and held it in her pearl-like teeth, silently paddling to meet the shark. There is a spot in these murderous brutes well known to the islanders, where the stroke of a long blade driven hard into the white belly will find the swim-bladder; and

when that is pricked the shark sinks or becomes disabled. The cruel fish had seen or divined the baby as a dainty prey, though ordinarily this Hawaiian species is too well fed or too particular to care much for brown meat. As he came within twice his own length of the father and child, he turned slowly over and slipped below the surface, the pale-coloured underside gleaming up through the green water; and just when you could discern the horse-shoe-shaped mouth opening to show the sharp-notched jaws and red palate of the man-eater, Mina-Mina's knife was plunged with all the weight of her lifted body, into the shark's side, whereupon the savage creature bounded half its length into the air, and then, with a furious threshing of its tail, vanished into the depths, leaving streaks of oily scarlet blood upon the foam which its leap had caused.

"Give me the child," she said; but before placing him on her back again, for the baby had grown somewhat wearied and chilled, she rubbed her nose hard against the little nose, after the fashion of Hawaiian kissing, and "*Aloha ino*, oh, my darling," she cried, "*Hiwa-hiwa*, my sweet little black pig! my life is nothing to give for thee."

The land—which meant rest; which meant safety, rescue, comfort, life—had come nigher by this time, and there would not be more than a mile and a half, or three-quarters to traverse. Mina-Mina, with the long black hair knotted on her head, still full of soaked hibiscus flowers, was swimming bravely, keep-

ing the boy's tiny hands upon her shoulders; and the sea was still and the current safely passed, when her ear missed the regular beat of Mauae's arms behind her. She turned her head over her shoulder, and saw that he was treading the water in the manner of a strong swimmer exhausted, his chin thrown back, his mouth open.

"My king! *he alii moe,*" she cried, "come on! Yet a little more, and we shall touch the coral ledges with our toes."

"*Olua!*" he answered, "go forward, you two. I must die! The fever has taken all the manhood from my muscles. *Mai huli oe.* Do not turn round again. Good-bye! I must go down into the night of the sea."

"No! father of my son! no," Mina-Mina passionately exclaimed. "The land is so close, I can see the doors of the huts. The reef is so near, I can see the seaweed waving on the outside shelves of the reef. Oh, a little farther, and we shall all be saved!"

The poor fellow struck out courageously again; but as she watched—herself gallantly breasting the sea, which broke gently on either side of her bosoms as from the bows of some dark ship—she saw his hands fall down, and the sea-water spill from the top of a wavelet into his mouth. Her Mauae was spent; he could never traverse by his own strength the distance still to be dealt with. These island women are placid and slow on shore, but in moments of crisis quick to act as a sea-bird is to decide upon its course of flight.

"Fall on your back, friend, fall, *Makamaka!*" she said, "I will give you some rest," and then she executed a wonderful piece of water-learning, fanning the sea beside him, so that in each stroke her returning arm gave him a sufficient support, while she kept herself and the baby still steadily moving in the right direction. But she was too much accustomed to the water not to know that her man was beyond hope if he should be left to himself. Hastily her fond heart made up its purpose. She could not keep them both above the waves; the effort she was making must soon come to an end. She must accordingly choose between the life of the father of her child, and the life of the son of her husband. A Hawaiian woman of her character would never hesitate. Mina-Mina did not hesitate.

"Swim now by yourself for a little, Mauae!" she moaned, with water in her black eyes, which was not from the sea. "I can help one of the two to land, but I cannot help both. My son—*Kahaha!* thou must die for him that gave thee beginning."

"Ah, wife! wife! no!" cries the Hawaiian, striking out anew; "let *he kama* live—let him come to be a man, and keep you when you are old. I must go. It is I will die. I cannot swim one canoe's length farther."

At this moment the baby, from its mother's back, chuckled out, from fun or habit, the word of the little Sandwich Island children when they go to their mats for sleep at night.

"Listen," said Mina-Mina, "he knows it is all

right. He says farewell to you. Oh! my *manu*, my bird, you will take so long to drown, you are so hearty. You will struggle, and cry for me, and call the sharks to you before you are dead. And there is no time left. Good-bye! rub my nose hard with your little nose. *Kuh honi ala aloha;* Oh, my last sweet loving kiss to you! Good-bye!"

With that she buried the knife-blade in her boy's heart, and let him slide dead into the sea. Two thin lines of blood from his little sinking body trailed backward to the spot where Mauae was just sinking, and a large blot of bright crimson darkened the green water where he disappeared. The father saw, comprehended, but was too far spent to speak.

Almost gone herself with grief and physical strain, she drew his hands over her shoulders, and setting her chin hard for the shore, flung out her strong shapely arms in splendid strokes, supporting her helpless lord; and gradually neared the coral reef. Where it opened into the lagoon a couple of fishermen were drawing their nets inside. They heard in the evening stillness the beat of her hands, started up, and saw Mina-Mina on the point of giving in within a stone's throw of the ledge, quite exhausted. The two Hawaiians dashed into the sea and dragged the pair safely to land, where both lay for a time speechless. When they recovered power to speak and move, the fishermen were astonished to see the husband kiss the wet feet of his wife, and say, very softly, "For my life I am your debtor and my son's."

Afterwards, when all understood well what had happened in the water, they called her Mina-Mina, and praised her exceedingly; and she has—as you saw—by this time another little baby-boy. But there is never out of her look a wistfulness, such as you may have noticed in passing her, and she will go down of evenings to the sea-edge at Koko Point, or Waikiki, and say things to herself. We think she perhaps says, "Darling! *he hiwa-hiwa!* oh, my little black pig that I had to cast away! If only I could have died for thee!"

XX

TENT LIFE

"WHILE THE EVENING FELL."

P. 363.

XX

TENT LIFE

CRUISING this week about the pleasant waters of the Solent, on board my yawl the *Harelda*, we landed one afternoon for a ramble on shore hard by Calshot Castle. Everybody who knows the locality at all will identify the little edifice, half fortress, half dwelling-house, standing on the spit of marsh to the westward of the entrance of Southampton Water. For the homeward-bound traveller from the Cape of Good Hope or the West Indies it is, after the Needles, the first sure landmark which tells him that he has really reached England; and now that the great Atlantic liners which we used to call the *City of Paris* and the *City of New York* come and go this way from and to America, Calshot Castle must become to many visitors a very familiar and almost famous object. As a fort it is nought. Solidly built, indeed, of a circular shape in well-laid masonry, with neatly-riveted loop-holes and cannon-ports, a symmetrical ditch, and a half-moon glacis, over which frown numerous embrasures, the little fortalice looks very business-like, no doubt, and might have been useful in the days when it was constructed. But to-day it does not boast a single gun; the drawbridge, which anybody can cross, is immovable, the

enceinte was full, at the time we saw it, of children's garments hung out to dry, and the only symbol of that warlike service from which it seems definitely to have retired, was the white ensign floating peacefully from its sunlit walls. If an enemy came by this road, something else besides Calshot Castle would have to stop his insulting career. A shell from any one of the huge modern guns which ships of war now carry would knock the shapely little building into "a cocked hat," although it occupies a spot which might very well be formidably fortified, and which would then command two extremely important waters, the West Solent and the channel leading up to the populous and wealthy port of Southampton. The site itself seems, however, in summer weather, too delicious for thoughts of belligerence. If there be such a magnate as the Governor of Calshot Castle, and he does not often reside there, he must be a personage singularly devoid of taste, or else too busy to "take the goods the gods provide him." Seascape and landscape show themselves alike delightful, as you stand upon the gently sloping mound of shingle and sea-shells upon which the small stronghold is planted, and look north, south, east, and west.

A broad avenue of silvery water leads between green banks inwards to Southampton, where masts and towers and spires may be just discerned. All along the left side stretches the verdant embroidery of the New Forest, vandyked here and there with parks and pastures, or indented with narrow creeks.

On the right hand, across the water, Hamble River steals into the sea, with its sleepy little maritime village, living principally upon a trade in crabs and lobsters, brought thither from all sorts of distant places for transmission to London. They are kept until wanted in huge floating cages, the big crabs being then packed alive in hampers after a fashion very neglectful of their private feelings. A mile or two above Hamble the red façade of Netley Hospital faces the water, embowered in woods, a goodly place for the military invalid, and one where many a gallant victim of war and hard service has placidly breathed his last. Turning southwards, the Solent's broad and beautiful expanse stretches far upon either hand, shining westwardly to Yarmouth and Lymington, and eastwardly to Ryde and Stokes Bay; while immediately opposite lies the yachting metropolis of the kingdom, Cowes, and the adjacent towers soar of Osborne and Norris Castle. Cowes, as we stood on Calshot Spit, was a perfect forest of masts, rising from a fleet of yachts of all sizes and rigs, from half-raters to the splendid schooners and steamers, and, amidst them, the majestic *Hohenzollern* lay moored like a white wall under the lawns of the Medina. The sky overhead was cloudless, but cloudlets of white smoke were lazily drifting with the light south-westerly air as we gazed, by reason of the Royal salute that was being fired from the guardship to welcome the Kaiser back to his yacht after the Portsmouth visit. Turning to walk along the sea-face which runs westwards towards Lymington, we traversed as lonely a bit of fore-

shore as could well be wished for. The people of the Castle and the Coastguard cottages adjoining pursue an exiguous agriculture with potatoes and cabbages, which realise perpetually the fate of the seed that fell upon stony ground. Deriving their sustenance from sand and pebbles, only the hardiest plant here and there pushes a leaf or two; but the blackberries like the sort of place that it is, and the wild roses also, and the golden-rods and sloe bushes. More beautiful than any flowers could be are the branches of the last-named, full of their small acrid thickly-clustered plums, bearing a lovely purple bloom; and though the wild roses are over, and the blackberries at present merely green and red, they make with the unripe cranberries exquisite clusters. On the rim of the sands, where the wiry grass marks the limit of the land, sea-thistles rear their handsome branches, with thorny and corrugated leaves like metal-work wrought in copper and aluminium, and with blue prickly flowers. The yellow sea-poppies speck the shingle with gold, and there pushes to the sun, in places, through the sandy turf, tufts of a little wort bearing a delicate pink flower, as pretty as a jewel; while, for further colour and beauty, there are cuckoo-pints, orange antirrhinum, the meadow-sweet, the scabious, and purple heather. About the wild blossoms hover and flit light-winged butterflies—the chalk-white, the painted lady, and the meadow-blue. It is a free, open, and quiet pleasaunce of Nature, well beloved by the rabbit, the snake, and the water-rat, whose paths are countless in the weed-spread ditches.

Yes; it would be good to be made Governor of Calshot Castle just for a week or two about the date of Cowes Regatta!

At the far edge of the expanse of this sandy flat—before reaching Count Batthyany's woods—we came upon an encampment numbering some six or eight tents, with a large marquee, and it is these that have set me writing. A blue ensign floated from a small staff in front of one of the tents, which bore a placard inscribed "The Rectory." Other tents displayed other fanciful appellations—"St. Augustine's Villa," "St. Anselm's Priory," and such like, while the juxtaposition of a Bible, a coffee-pot, a surplice, and an empty bottle of Bass carried out the odd admixture of clerical and gipsy elements pervading the "pitch." Nobody was to be seen about except a sailor lad, who had charge of the camp, and he soon explained to us that what we witnessed was the temporary home of some forty young men from an Association in the inland country, whose clergyman brought them year by year down to this spot, to get eight or ten days of pure air and exercise. They were all away at church at the moment, for the day was Sunday, and their idle bicycles, cricket-bats, walking-sticks, and heavy boots were lying in or about the tents. Yet you could see at a glance how jolly they had been during the past week, and would be until the outing was over; and the idea was borne in upon us all how much wiser and happier such a plan was than to be mewed up in plundering and unwholesome seaside lodgings.

Pitched in this delicious nook of shore and sea, upon a sandy table-land, where they could do no sort of harm to any rights of property—and yet where they had the sea and the sky and the wild heath to themselves, as if they owned them all—I thought they set a good example to town-folk, especially young folk, planning a holiday at this season of the year, since there are thousands of places round our coasts where such encampments might properly and harmlessly be erected, and such bell-tents as this party possessed are very cheap to buy or hire, being apparently cast-off military stores.

Nobody knows, who has not tried it, how pleasant and healthy it is to live under canvas. Of course one wants settled weather for the perfection of such *al fresco* life, but the English summer is not always rainy, and you may be as dry in a tent as in a house if the canvas be good and well set up, and if you dig a trench in the proper fashion round the flies. That little group of healthy gipsy homes upon the Calshot Spit set me thinking of the happy days I have myself passed in India under canvas. There the art of tent-life is carried to its utmost limits of comfort and delightfulness, and I should be inclined to say—taking all in all—that the very pleasantest and most delicious way of life in the whole world is that of the Indian official who in the "cold weather" goes "into the districts" for two or three months of existence under canvas in the lovely and ever-diversified jungles of Goozerat, or the Deccan, or the Central Provinces. Ah! the glorious and joyous

days and nights that I myself remember in beautiful and wonderful India! Ah! the rides and expeditions in that fair and warm Poona country, amid the hills of Sivaji and the temples of Mahadeo, in years when I could talk Murathi like a *gaum-wallah*, and lived week after week under my *bîchoba!* It is something, however, to have had such experience even once in a life!

The way is this. The tents made for such use in India are of cotton, and very strong and durable—put together after many patterns, of which what we used to style the "Cottage" was, perhaps, most commodious. They were largely manufactured at Jubbulpoor by convict Thugs, and we would buy or hire a double set of these, including a sort of "lean-to" for the servants, with "bath tents," and, of course, the necessary cattle and ox-carts—or sometimes camels—to carry them and the kit. Then, on an appointed day, when all had been organised down to the smallest *gindi* by the proper servants, the first set of tents was sent forward two marches, the second set one march, and in the cool of the Indian afternoon we galloped our horses out to the nearest stopping-stage. Under some splendid mango grove or tamarind tree, near to a tank or running stream, and within sight of some picturesque Deccan village, we found our white jungle homes pitched and awaiting us. Good it was to dismount in the shade from our sweating Arabs, to shake off the heavy riding boots, to find the "tub" ready, nicely softened with a *chatty* of hot water, and then to sit down to a well-

spread board in the wilderness, while the evening fell,

And all the Indian sky grew purple peace.

Then, after tobacco and chat, what faultless sleep we had upon the camp "charpoys," nowise disturbed by the familiar yells of the inevitable jackals and the hootings of the small Deccan owl, *goobud*, who hated to have his sylvan solitudes invaded! Inside the clean, cool, pretty tent, with its Persian carpets and light furniture of camp utensils, guns, rifles, and saddles, the glimmering *butti* shed a faint light, enough to show if thief or snake entered; scorpions and centipedes you could not always keep at a distance. Outside the canvas the sounds of the night, other than those mentioned, would be the bells tinkling round the necks of the feeding cattle, the horses stamping at their heel-ropes, the soft chatter of the servants and coolies round the fires, and from the village hard by the rhythmical beat of the tom-toms and the barking of the pariah dogs. In the morning we were up before the dawn, while the "wolf's tail," as they call the first gleam of grey light, was still long in the sky; and there was the hot coffee and the bit of toast or biscuit before we mounted for the jungle ride, not forgetting gun and rifle. The glorious mornings that they were—the superb sunrises, when the *dam-i-sabh*, the "breath of morning," moved across the plain, and woke up Asia! We would see the jackals and wild boar stealing guiltily home from their nocturnal trespass; the monkeys

going through their forest toilet with a mutual scratch or two, and a cuff all round from the elders for the youngsters; the golden coats of the black buck shining amidst the *bajri* and *jowari*, and the clamorous, variegated grouse flying in wedges across the pale, warm sky to drink. And arriving, after three or four hours' ride through the ever-interesting jungle, with its endless variety of animal and floral life, we would find our second set of white woodland homes awaiting us, pitched in some spot as charming as that of the night before, with bath and breakfast ready. There would we pass the bright and hot Indian day, doing what duty—educational or administrative—we had in the neighbourhood; while last night's set of tents and kit crept across the country past our new stage, and forward to the next, so as to be pitched in time for our arrival after the evening ride. Sometimes it would be cool enough to stroll out, before the start, along the banks of some lovely river, or among the quail and snipe in the green rice-grounds; sometimes only the vultures and crows could abide the full glare of that mid-day sun, and we were fain to wait until the shadows grew long. Hereafter I may, perhaps, recall to memory some of the curious civil and criminal cases that I have heard adjudged round the "*kanauts*" of these Indian tents; some of the odd interviews with rajahs and dusky magnates which befell there; some of the deeper mysteries and marvels of that wild and silent jungle of Asia. They were all brought back to me by the tents upon Calshot

Spit, and I am the more inclined to say, the more I think about it, that half enough use is not made by English tourists and holiday-seekers of the delights, the comforts, and the pleasures afforded by life under canvas.

THE END

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